

THE
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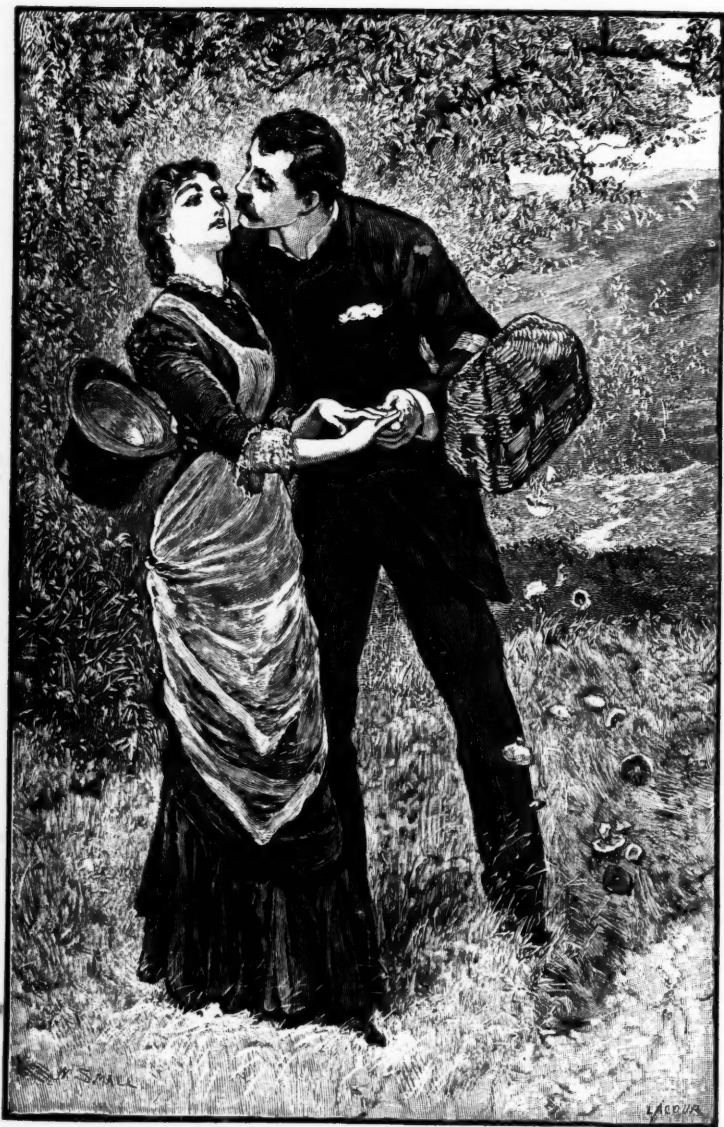
THE
CORNHILL
MAGAZINE.

VOL. XLV.

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1882.

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1882.



A SACRED DUTY.

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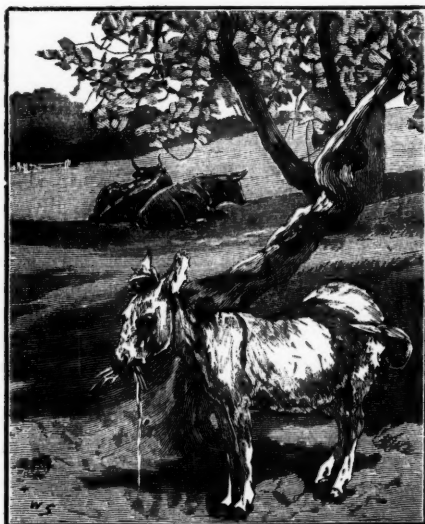
JANUARY, 1882.

A Grape from a Thorn.

By JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER LIII.

BAD NEWS.



A FEW days afterwards, as they were sitting at breakfast, Mr. Wallace, who received as few written communications perhaps as any grown person within the range of the British postal delivery, exclaimed suddenly, on opening the letter bag, 'Why, who's this writing to me?'

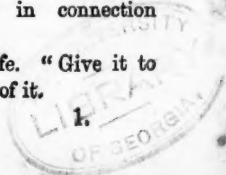
"Not a lady, I hope," said Ella slyly; "though that's Mrs. Wallace's affair and not mine."

"It's got 'Private' on it," cried the yeoman with a laugh, as though privacy in connection

with epistolary correspondence was a joke indeed.

"Oh, come, I must see to that!" exclaimed his wife. "Give it to me, John;" and she made a feint of gaining possession of it.

VOL. XLV.—NO. 265.



"No, you don't!" cried her husband, who in the mean time had just glanced at the contents. "Perhaps I'll tell you something about it after breakfast— No; I won't take a rasher this morning, thank you; nor yet any pigeon pie. I'm rather off my feed."

"Lor, John, what is the matter?" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, to whom this statement was indeed a portent of evil.

"I am afraid there is bad news from Wallington," murmured Ella, with a white face.

"Well, that is just it, Miss Ella," said the farmer in embarrassed tones; "only I was particularly not to tell you all of a sudden like. That's why they wrote to me instead of the Missis. I was to 'break it' to you, Mr. Felspar says; but since you've guessed it—" and Mr. Wallace scratched his head, and looked oppressed with the burthen of an honour to which he was not born. Nobody had ever entrusted him with a secret before in all his life.

"Pray tell me all," cried Ella imploringly; "I can bear anything except suspense."

"He says I am to break it—I suppose he means in little bits," said Mr. Wallace doubtfully.

But by this time his wife had possessed herself of the communication, which she at once proceeded to read aloud.

"Wallington Bay.

"MY DEAR WALLACE,—I write these lines under cover to you, that you may communicate the sad news they convey to your wife in private, and especially that she and you may break them cautiously to Miss Josceline. A dreadful catastrophe has happened here. In my last letter I expressed my fears that Mr. Aird's coming to this place might be fraught with some danger; and I deeply regret to say that they have been realised. As soon as Dr. Cooper saw him he expressed to me the gravest anxiety about his state of mind. There was only one thing, as I told you, which betrayed this—when the least allusion was made to little Davey he was not himself. But after he came down here he could talk of nothing else. We thought it better he should be at Clover Cottage with ourselves and not at the hotel, which, as it turns out, was perhaps so far fortunate. Yesterday morning, when, as we thought, he was in his room, the doctor called and had a talk with us about him.

"It is my duty to tell you," he said in conclusion, "that Mr. Aird must never be left alone—that one of you two must be always with him. But of course such a state of things cannot last for ever."

"At this moment in walked Mr. Aird.

"Of course it can't," he said gravely. "They have had trouble enough about me—these two—already."

"It seems he had been listening at the door—a proceeding, I need not say, utterly foreign to his nature. Dr. Cooper has since told me

that it was to him a convincing proof of his insanity—an example of the madman's cunning."

"Poor soul, think of that!" ejaculated Mrs. Wallace.

"Well, we explained matters as well as we could to him; assured him that our time was his for the next month or two at all events; that he gave us no trouble whatever, &c. &c.; and he seemed satisfied.

"I must tell you that since your time—the old happy times, alas! at Wallington—the steamer between Meresley and Northport has called here once a week, touching at the Bay the same day, on its return from Northport. Yesterday was, with us, very tempestuous for the time of year—not a wet day, but very windy—the sea mountains high, and we hardly expected that the steamer could put in. It did so, however, and nothing I could say would dissuade Mr. Aird from going on it; he said he thought the 'blow' from Northport and back would do him good.

"Quite right," said Vernon in his quiet way; "I think it will do me good too."

"Pooh, pooh!" said Mr. Aird; "you are well enough as it is; why should you go?"

"The steamer is a public conveyance," returned Vernon, laughing, "and it is a free country."

"You know how difficult it is to be angry with Vernon; and, though Mr. Aird evidently resented his determination, he said nothing more. They two were the only passengers, and very astonished the captain was to see them come aboard. As if to mark his sense of annoyance, Mr. Aird sat apart from Vernon the whole of the way to Northport, where they touched but did not stop. On the way back the sea abated a little; but even then it was not possible to move about without holding on to something. When they were nearing home, Vernon, who never took his eyes off Mr. Aird, saw him suddenly climb upon the paddle-box, and leap into the sea. 'Man overboard!' he shouted to the captain on the bridge, and the next moment jumped in after him. He did not even wait to kick his shoes off."

"Oh, that dear Mr. Vernon!" sobbed Mrs. Wallace.

"A good fellow," observed the farmer hoarsely; "a real good fellow."

Ella said nothing, only moved her lips. Her face was as white as the breakfast-cloth—and the linen at Foracre farm was like the driven snow.

"The captain says that Mr. Aird had literally no time to sink; that Vernon was down on him like a sea-bird on a fish; but by the time the steamer could be stopped and a boat lowered, it was well nigh all over with both of them. It must have been so if Mr. Aird had clutched him; but, though the old man could not swim, he made no attempt to do this, whether from a noble unselfishness, or the absence of even the instinctive love of life, can never be known."

"He is dead, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, aghast with horror.

"Read on," said Ella earnestly.

"Even in such a sea, Vernon, being so strong a swimmer, would have had no difficulty in bearing the other up; but the fact is, though there is no need to talk of it, poor Mr. Aird, with that 'madman's cunning,' of which the doctor spoke, had filled his pockets full of pebbles, which of course he took with him from Wallington. Conceive the poor man's thoughts upon that voyage and back again; seeking for the opportunity when the captain's back was turned, or perhaps making up his mind—or what remained of it, poor soul!—for the fatal plunge. What, I think, testifies to Vernon's presence of mind, as convincingly as his heroic act itself (for it was nothing less), was that while in the boat, and before they were taken on board, he contrived to remove the pebbles, so that the whole affair might wear the appearance of an accident. Mr. Aird appeared quite lifeless; but before the steamer reached Wallington he had revived a little, and was carried here in a very prostrate condition, but, as I have good reason to believe, quite conscious. He died, however, 'from the shock and exhaustion,' says Dr. Cooper, within the hour. When we have laid him in his grave, in that churchyard at Barton which we all know so well, either Vernon or myself will run down to Foracre Farm. It was his own wish that we should do so, for the purpose, for one thing, of conveying to Miss Josceline a last memento of him, or rather of one that he loved dearer than himself—sweet little Davey. You will keep what I have written concerning the nature of his end secret among yourselves; it was his desire—a very strange one you will say—that you should know it; and, though with great reluctance, I have therefore described things exactly as they happened. Of course he was not responsible for the act in any way. His mind had broken down under its weight of trouble. Just at first it wandered a little, and he said something about Vernon—though with a very sweet smile—that we could make nothing of; but before his end came he was quite himself, which Dr. Cooper says is not unusual in such cases. 'I die happy,' were his last words, spoken with inexpressible tenderness; 'think of me to-night with my own Davey.'

"I am afraid," concluded Felspar, "I shall have been the involuntary cause of throwing a deep shadow (where there is wont to be such sunshine) in your happy home. I add, therefore, that among other things our poor friend whispered to us on his deathbed, was this: 'Let none who love me grieve for me; let not my death, which is happiness to me, be the cause of sorrow to any human being.' There were other things he said of which Vernon or myself, whichever comes, will inform you; just at present I have a good deal to do, as you may imagine when I tell you Mr. Aird has made me his sole executor, so you must excuse my writing at greater length. With our kindest regards to your wife and to Miss Ella,

"I am, your faithful friend,

"MICHAEL FELSPAR."

In spite of poor Mr. Aird's last injunctions, his death, or rather, it would be more correct to say, the manner of his end, was the cause of much sorrow at Foracre Farm. That death had been a happy release to the weary and forlorn old man himself, there could be no doubt; and, after the first shock of the news had worn away, this was the view the little party at the Farm took of it. Without a friend (save those we wot of) or a relative in the world, and with every reminiscence a pang, how could they have wished him to live on! In a few days they began to speak of the matter calmly, and (so closely does humour tread on the heels of tragedy) on one occasion it was even the cause of a smile.

"It is very odd, John," observed Mrs. Wallace—who, with all her tenderness of heart, often took the most matter-of-fact view of affairs, and, again, sometimes said things which, if she had turned them over in her mind first, she would certainly have left unsaid—"it is very odd how that unfortunate remark of mine at the *table d'hôte* at Wallington has come true; there's not only little Davey dead, you see, but his poor father."

"Not to mention the Hon. Emilius Josceline," remarked her husband drily.

"Lor bless me! If I hadn't clean forgotten him!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace; "how thankful I am, John, Ella was not here. How stupid and unfeeling I am!"

"Well, I don't know as to that, little woman. Mr. Josceline was a very clever gentleman, but I doubt if any eye dropped a tear for him, save his daughter's. I don't know that you had any particular call to remember him. How curious it is," continued the yeoman musingly, "that with cattle and such like a good breed or a bad makes such a difference; with human beings it aint at all so. Here's Miss Ella, for example, all unselfishness and simplicity."

"Perhaps she got it from her mother," hazarded Mrs. Wallace. "She has spoken to me about her once or twice as having been a perfect angel."

"Perhaps so. She was an angel, however, before her daughter knew her, so could scarcely have had much hand in forming her character; and even with the cattle, something beyond breed is required. The best Alderney wouldn't thrive in Shetland, I'll be bound. No; I think there is such a thing as sheer natural goodness, though, of course, as in Miss Ella's case, it grows and grows by use. It would be a thousand pities if such a girl should never marry. What a good wife she would make; and what a mother!"

"No doubt," said Mrs. Wallace with a sigh, for she, too, would have given much to have had children about her knees. "Let us hope it will be so."

"If Mr. Felspar is made sole executor," remarked her husband significantly, "it is probable that the old man has left him a good bit of money."

"I hope so. But you are quite on the wrong tack, John, in supposing that would affect Ella's future. If Mr. Felspar was rolling in wealth she would never have him."

"Well; he comes down here next week, it seems, and then we shall see. Now I'll lay my best cow against the white donkey that takes your milk about, that this time next month Ella is engaged to be married."

"I never made a bet in my life that I know of," said Mrs. Wallace confidently; "but I'll take this one. I shall win that cow."

"If you do, it shall be 'for your separate use and maintenance,' as Lawyer Fell used to call it; but I rather think you will lose your white donkey, and I will ride to market on it instead of Dobbin."

At this picture—for the farmer weighed something, and the donkey was small—the worthy pair, who were easily tickled, were much moved to mirth.

"By-the-bye," said Mr. Wallace presently, "why shouldn't Mr. Aird leave Miss Ella something for herself? He was very fond of her (as was only natural), and think how kind she was to his boy!"

"I have thought of that, of course, John. But there is something that tells me that won't be. Ella is very peculiar about money matters; she wouldn't take Mr. Aird's thousand pounds, you remember, when she wanted it a deal more than she does now, and I doubt if she would take his money even now."

"What! not if it was left to her? Well, I never!"

"Nor anybody else, John; but still that is my belief. Did it never strike you that perhaps Mr. Josceline had old Mr. Aird in his eye for a son-in-law?"

"It certainly never did. Why, the poor man was old enough for her grandfather."

"Well; he must have married young for that, John; but of course there was a great disparity. However, my conviction is that some such idea as that was put into Ella's mind by her father, and that that's why she refused Mr. Aird's assistance. It set her against him like—that is, in the way of accepting anything from his hands, and it will set her against it now."

"Well, certainly, you women do get strange things into your heads, such as we men never do, yet I can't believe that of Ella."

"You must admit, however, she did refuse the money."

"Yes, she did; and I think Dr. Cooper (or anybody else) would say it was a much greater proof of madness than listening at doors. Cattle I understand, but not women—women are kittle cattle;" and the yeoman smiled complacently as a man has a right to do over his own joke, when he makes but one in a twelvemonth.

CHAPTER LIV.

MUSHROOM PICKING.

ONE of the few amusements of the Foracre folks—for pastimes were not in their way; time never hung heavy enough on hand to need *them*—was mushroom gathering. In due season they could be gathered by the basketful in the meadows about the farm, and Mrs. Wallace and Ella would often require the services of the white donkey to bring home their spoil. The goodman of the house delighted in these dainties, and sometimes Ella would go forth in the early morning and forage for them for his breakfast.

One morning she was engaged in this occupation a few fields from home, and had been fortunate beyond her expectations; having stooped for her last mushroom, she was returning with much spoil, when she suddenly saw some one getting over a stile in the next field, at the sight of whom she suddenly dropped her basket and turned pale, as though he had been a mad bull. Yet the field was a public one, and a path ran through it from the little railway station, so that the sight of a stranger could hardly have been so very unexpected. And, moreover, he was not a stranger. He was a young man of very respectable appearance—indeed, he was in deep mourning—who took off his hat to her with marked respect, though with a certain nervousness of manner which fortunately she was not near enough to him to observe. He had a bronzed face on which, in spite of his efforts to make it grave, there was a tender smile.

"I'm afraid I frightened you, Miss Ella, by my premature appearance," he said as he came up and took her hand; "visitors have no right to come at such hours, but the fact is I travelled by the night mail."

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Vernon, very," she said, "and so, I am sure, will Mr. and Mrs. Wallace be; but we didn't expect—that is——"

"You expected Felspar, of course, instead of me," he said, "which no doubt is a disappointment."

"I did not say that, Mr. Vernon, though Mr. Felspar is a great favourite with all of us."

"And so he ought to be, for he deserves it. He is, I believe, one of the best of men, as I am sure he is the best of friends. But the fact is his hands are just now too full of affairs—business matters—to admit of his coming down."

"Matters connected with poor Mr. Aird, of course. Oh, Mr. Vernon, how that shocked us all!"

"I was afraid it would, but we thought it better to tell you the whole truth." And then they fell to talking about their dead friend.

From what Vernon told her of the matter she soon lost that feeling

of horror concerning his end which the idea of suicide (once so heroic, now so reprobated) always inspires. Upon one point, on which he shipwrecked, Mr. Aird had been undoubtedly insane, and was therefore blameless; on all others he had shown himself to the last the kindly, generous, and (beneath the rugged surface) tender-hearted man that he really was.

"He loved you, Ella," said Vernon, "as though he had been your own father."

Ella trembled, partly because this speech awakened certain memories, partly because her companion in his earnestness and fervour had called her for the first time by her Christian name. He had done so unconsciously no doubt, but the sound of the more familiar title from Vernon's lips had a strange attraction for her. His voice, indeed, was very sweet and low, and, from the nature of the subject, confidential. They walked together side by side; he had picked up her mushrooms for her, and was carrying her basket in one hand, but the other somehow had sought her own.

"That he should have been attached to you, Ella," he continued, "can surprise no one; but his last words also expressed a great regard for a much less worthy object—myself."

"How could it have been otherwise?—that is, I mean——" said Ella, repenting of the enthusiasm her tone had involuntarily displayed; "did you not risk your life for him, Mr. Vernon?"

"My name is Walter," returned the young man very gently; "would you mind calling me Walter?"

As Ella did not reply to this question, it must be taken for granted that she did not mind.

"As Mr. Aird was so fond of you, and had a regard for me," Vernon went on, "it was only natural that he should associate us together in his mind, or perhaps he guessed something—a secret I had assuredly never told him, since I had not dared to tell it even to you."

They walked on in silence, but very slowly; there was a singing in her ears, yet Ella could hear their feet moving through the fresh grass; the low of the cows in the homestead; the song of a distant thrush.

"It was because he guessed my secret and wished me to tell it to you (for which I had not hitherto had the courage), that he sent me hither as the bearer of his last farewell. He said to me, 'Give my dear love to her, Vernon, and if, as I think, you love one another, kiss her for me.'"

And here Walter kissed her. That, of course, was a sacred duty. Having performed it, you would think, perhaps, that there was an end of the affair; but that was not the case. He followed up the caress by proxy, by kissing his fair companion upon his own account. And somehow or another, though Ella was by no means resolute in her resistance, those unfortunate mushrooms fell out of the basket during the process.

"I have loved you, darling, from the first instant I set eyes on you," whispered this impulsive young man. And (though I am too much of a gentleman, I hope, to repeat a lady's exact words, uttered in a moment of confidence), I may say that Ella murmured something that had a similar tendency.

At this particular spot the hedgerow between them and the Farm happened to be exceptionally thick, and neither of them for some moments evinced any disposition to proceed where the veil of greenery was thinner. Indeed, they might have stopped there much longer, but for a summons from the garden from the mistress of the house herself.

"El—la! El—la! breakfast, breakfast!" she shouted in her cheerful tones.

They were close by, though she could not see them; and it was really rather embarrassing for them to come out as it were of ambush, and show themselves. However, they had to do it.

"What, Mr. Vernon! Good gracious! Is it really you?"

"I believe so, ma'am," said the young gentleman modestly, though indeed he was in such a tumult of happiness that he might well have been doubtful of his own identity. "We have ventured to bring you a little present of mushrooms."

"But where *are* the mushrooms?"

In his confusion, the too happy young man had not perceived that his basket was empty. Its late contents lay where the hedge was thickest, yet not more out of sight than out of mind.

"Oh, never mind the mushrooms!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace delightedly; "pray walk in, Mr. Vernon; and Ella, do you go upstairs and change your boots immediately, because the grass is so wet."

Being a woman, she, of course, took in the situation at a glance, and offered this way of escape to the blushing Ella.

Mr. Vernon had a great deal to talk about at breakfast that morning, and it was certainly natural that he should be the chief speaker, but even Mr. Wallace couldn't help noticing how silent Ella was; on the other hand, she was a most excellent listener—so good a one that she might, to some minds, have suggested a parallel to Desdemona hanging on the accents of Othello.

Vernon had brought for her the portrait of little Davey which Mr. Aird had confided to his keeping; and when Ella left the room to put this precious gift away, Mrs. Wallace could not restrain her feminine curiosity to know "what poor Mr. Aird had done with all his money."

"He has left some of it to Felspar," said Vernon, blushing even more than he had done over the empty mushroom basket; "but the bulk of it has gone elsewhere."

This was not very satisfactory; and, what was worse, it was plain that Mr. Vernon did not wish to be put to the question on that point;

yet Mrs. Wallace could not restrain herself from saying, "Then do you mean to say that, except the picture of little Davey, he has left Ella nothing?"

"He has left her nothing but the picture."

"I am sorry for that," said Mrs. Wallace rather drily.

She afterwards observed to her husband, when alone with him, that though Mr. Vernon had looked grave enough when he gave them this information, he had not looked particularly sorry.

"Perhaps he's got the money himself," suggested the farmer. "In that case you can hardly expect him to be in tears about the disposal of it."

"How hard you are, John!" said his wife reprovingly. "Though, indeed, even if Mr. Vernon has got it——"

"Well, what?"

"Well, I would tell you a secret if I thought you could keep it. It is my firm impression that Mr. Vernon has come in for Mr. Aird's estate. It was only his poverty that made him hesitate so long about asking Ella to marry him, and now that he feels he can offer her a fitting home, and an establishment——"

"No," interrupted the farmer emphatically; "our Miss Ella is not of that sort. She is not one of those fine young ladies who care about an establishment."

"I did not say she was, John. Really if you go on like this about Miss Ella, you'll make some one else jealous."

"You jealous? No, my little woman; you've too much sense for that."

Here, to the farmer's great astonishment, his wife began to laugh. "I was not referring to myself at all, you silly old creature. Where was I when you broke in with your 'our Miss Ella?' Yes; I was saying that now Mr. Vernon has the means he will marry her; indeed, he has told me almost as much this very morning. Now what do you think of that?"

Mr. Wallace scratched his head in amazement; if he had known that all Vernon had said was, "We have ventured to bring you a little present of mushrooms," he would not have felt perhaps the same conviction on the matter as his wife did. As it was, he observed, "Nay, but that was quick work, lass."

"I suppose he was making up for lost time," observed Mrs. Wallace, who was in great spirits. It was a high testimony to her unselfishness that she was so, since the stroke of fortune which would make her favourite such a happy woman, would of necessity take her away from Foracre Farm, where she had won the hearts of both host and hostess, and was as a daughter of their own.

Perhaps the farmer imagined that his wife had forgotten this dark side of the picture, for he observed gravely, "If things are as you say, little woman, I am afraid you will feel parting with the lass. She has found the same place in your heart that poor Gerty used to hold, I reckon."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Wallace. "Heaven forbid, however, I should grudge the dear girl to the man she loves. Besides, marriage is not like death; we don't lose her, but only lend her."

"And by-the-bye," remarked the yeoman slyly, "you have lost something else remember, by this love affair. I've won your white donkey."

"Not a bit of it," said his wife. "On the contrary, you have reminded me that I have won your cow."

"My words were," replied her husband with a seriousness that it was easy for one of his sedateness to affect, "I'll lay my best cow against your white donkey that this time next month Miss Ella is engaged to be married."

"Yes; but you meant to Mr. Felspar."

"Now, it's a most extraordinary thing," observed the farmer, "that whenever a woman makes a bet and loses it she always tries to make out she won it."

"You know very well I've won it, John."

"Very well; we'll just refer it to a third person. Here's Mr. Vernon and Ella, who count as one, and indeed look like it—dear me! he had his arm round her waist, though he has just whipped it away—now I'll appeal to them. Mr. Vernon" (raising his voice), "my wife has bet——"

"Be quiet, John, how dare you!" exclaimed his spouse, putting her hand up to his mouth to stop him.

"Has bet her white donkey to my best cow——"

"For shame, John, for shame!"

"That you and Miss Ella"—here, what with laughter and the gag his consort had contrived for him, the good-natured yeoman stood in peril of suffocation. "Well, if you'll give in, little woman, I'll not say another word," he sputtered. "Otherwise—her bet was, Mr. Vernon——"

"The donkey is yours, John," cried poor Mrs. Wallace *in extremis*; "but I think you are very mean."

I don't suppose the yeoman took possession of his prize or meant to take it, but never over any bargain at fair or market had he grinned and chuckled as he did over the winning of that white donkey. The circumstances, however, evoked from Ella (who, I fancy, for all her innocent looks, guessed what that bet had been about) a full confession to her friend and hostess, compressed however (*à la* Liebig) into half a dozen words. "I am just the happiest girl in all the world, dear Mrs. Wallace."

In answer to the latter's eager inquiries, however, it seemed she had no details to communicate, and yet she had been talking to her Walter all the morning.

"But am I not right in supposing that Mr. Aird has left Mr. Vernon a fortune, Ella?"

"I am sure I don't know, she answered." Stay, "yes I do; he can't have done that, for I remember now that Walter said I must not mind marrying a very poor man."

CHAPTER LV.

CREEK COTTAGE.

"THE wishes of the departed are above all things to be respected," is a well-known and most respectable dogma. And no one could have shown himself more piously inclined in this way than Walter Vernon. Mr. Aird, it seems, had not confined himself to the expression of a general hope that his demise should not be the cause of sorrow to others, but had urged a speedy union between his two young friends. Arrangements for their marriage, in short, were made almost immediately. The wedding which, upon all accounts, was a very quiet one, of course took place at Foracre Farm; the good yeoman giving the bride away, though, as he frankly told the bridegroom, "very unwillingly." For Mr. and Mrs. Wallace it was indeed like losing the light of their house for a second time; albeit the bridegroom promised that it should shine again there once every year at the very least. Invitations were issued to Miss Burt and Mr. Felspar; but, strange to say, were accepted by the former only. The painter had suddenly been sent for (he wrote) on important business to Rome, and was unable to be present.

"I am very, very sorry," said Ella with tears of vexation in her eyes, as she read his letter. "He has been such a good friend to me, dear Mrs. Wallace, you cannot think. I should have liked to have told him so with my own lips."

Mrs. Wallace looked very grave. "I think, my darling, things are better, perhaps, as they are."

"What! better that dear Mr. Felspar should not come to my wedding? You can't mean that?"

"Yes, I do; just that. I think it would have been a great trial to him. It is not only John and I who have to make up our minds to part with you to Mr. Vernon, my darling."

Then Ella began to sob and tremble as she had never done in her life. "I never dreamt of such a thing," she said.

"Of course not. He was too careful and unselfish for that."

"And he always praised dear Walter so," murmured Ella faintly.

"He acted like a loyal friend and a true gentleman, my darling; but it cost him something, you may be very sure."

"Do you think Walter knows about it?" she faltered.

"I am sure he doesn't, my darling; he would not be so happy if he did, even though he has won you. You must never tell him; only keep a corner of your honest heart for the loser, for he deserves it."

The day before the wedding there arrived a marriage gift from Mr. Felspar which (read by this new light) deepened Ella's sorrow for him, while it touched the unconscious Vernon to the core.

"Just look what the dear fellow writes," he said, putting Felspar's letter into her hand.

"I send you, my dear Walter, that which of all my possessions you will prize the most—your wife's portrait, painted from the sketch I took at Wallington on the very day (do you remember?) when you first confided to me your love for her. We are such old friends that nothing I can say in the way of affection will be new to you. When I write that you are worthy of her there remains, indeed, in the way of eulogy, nothing to be said."

"Now I call that most charming and touching," exclaimed Walter. "And from what I know of the regard he bears to you, I am sure he has sent me the most precious thing in his possession."

"God bless him!" said Ella earnestly; and she said no more.

It happened, curiously enough, that another of their wedding gifts was a picture, and painted, too, by the same hand. Miss Burt had brought with her in addition to her own present (an exquisite lace collar and cuffs of her own working) a cadeau from his Highness which curiously reflected the kindness and egotism of the donor. It was a paintbox of solid silver and wondrous workmanship, under the lid of which was a reduced copy of his own portrait by Mr. Felspar, and beneath it the autograph, "Charles Edward," in hereditary handwriting.

"Mr. Heyton desired to be most respectfully remembered to you, my dear," said Miss Burt, with a mimetic movement of her hand to her heart. "I don't think he would like Mr. Vernon one bit better than he liked Mr. Felspar," she added with a droll significance, which convinced her niece that she was aware the secretary had been a rejected suitor. The old lady's delight at hearing that the young couple, after a brief visit to London, were to pass their honeymoon, and perhaps some time beyond it, at the *Ultramarine*, was charming to witness.

On the very morning of the wedding there arrived a beautiful portfolio for holding drawings, of such a gigantic size that, since Ella's modest luggage included no ark of the fashionable kind, it could be packed nowhere, but had to travel, on the seat beside them, like a third passenger. It was labelled, "A trifle from Wallington" (as if it had been a sixpenny mug), and was supposed (and rightly) to have come from Dr. Cooper.

A week afterwards Ella found herself on the same noble road on which, but two years ago, we were first introduced to her under very different circumstances. Above the trees upon her right stood up the towers of Barton Castle, with the flag flying from its summit, about which her then companion had inquired with such unaccustomed curiosity. By her side was now her husband. She was quite happy, but her happiness was tinged with a certain tender gravity not common with brides. In yonder churchyard lay the father, who, with all his faults, had loved her dearly; the old friend, who would have showed himself friendly in a hundred ways, if she would have permitted him to do so; and the little child snatched so prematurely from his loving arms. All lay together there at rest.

What experiences, too, had she herself undergone, in those few fateful months! She had tried dependence, and might have tried independence (for her earnings with her pencil were now quite sufficient to have maintained her) but that her good friends at Foracre Farm had forbidden the experiment, and now, again, she was no longer her own, but her husband's. They would both have to work hard; but labour was sweet to both of them, and to live frugally a necessity which had no terrors for them.

"I am afraid, Walter," said she presently, "that we shall find living at the *Ultramarine* a little expensive. I hope that you will not prolong your stay there upon my account. Could we not move in a day or two to your old lodgings at Clover Cottage?"

"My darling," said Walter admiringly, "there is this delightful peculiarity about you, which alone would render you the most charming woman in the world, if you had not a thousand other attractions; you always say exactly the right thing in the right place. My desire, of course, is to please you; and, as it struck me that you might possibly prefer lodgings to the hotel, I have actually bespoken them."

"What, at Clover Cottage?"

"Well, no, because Felspar is in occupation of it. That is another surprise I had for you. He wrote yesterday to say that feeling he 'had behaved in a most selfish and unfriendly way' (that is how he talks of having obeyed an urgent necessity) 'in not having been present at your wedding, he means to be at Wallington to welcome you.' I wrote to him in your name to say how delighted you would be to see his friendly face again."

"And so I am, Walter."

"I knew you would be. Well, Clover Cottage being full, it doesn't seem to strike you that there are no other lodgings in Wallington. But it so happens, that since your time—indeed, a few months after you went to Barton—rather a pretty little cottage was built at Abbot's Creek (the very place where our dear friend Mr. Aird lost his locket, if you remember), and I have taken that for a month or two."

The carriage, indeed, turned southward as he spoke, so as to leave Wallington on the right, and presently drove up in front of the house in question. It was new, of course; but being picturesquely built of stone, with creepers trained over it, and being placed in a lovely garden, it was neither crude nor staring. Through the open windows the sitting-room looked very pretty and charmingly furnished.

"What a naughty, extravagant boy you are, Walter!" she whispered, so that the maid who stood to welcome them at the door should not hear her; "the rent of such a palace as this will ruin us in a month."

He laughed in his light way, and said, "Not quite."

Ella stepped into the little drawing-room while Walter was "settling" for the carriage, and the servants were taking the luggage upstairs, and looked about her. The windows opened on the sequestered cove which

she so well remembered, and within everything was tasteful and pretty, and, above all, reminded her of a husband's care. Her picture, sent on direct from Devonshire, already hung upon the wall, and on the table were her favourite books. Among them was Fortescue's *Ballads from English History*. She noticed, however, it was not her own copy, and in the fly-leaf read these words in Walter's handwriting: "Illustrated by his beloved wife."

He found her sitting over it, as Mrs. Wallace afterwards described her relations to the little volume, "like a hen with one chick."

"That is another surprise which you have discovered for yourself," said Walter smiling.

"How could you, could you, deceive me so?" cried Ella pitifully. "Suppose I hadn't liked the poems?"

"Well, then I should never have told you about them. But didn't you guess the truth, when Felspar used to run them down, and protest they were not half good enough for the illustrations?"

"No, I never guessed. I only admired them very much."

"Oh, you flatterer!" Here ensued what ancient writers term "a love passage."

"And did Mr. Felspar know about it all along? When he was at Barton, for instance?"

"No; I could not trust him with such a secret. He learnt it, however, soon afterwards."

"Then you were my first patron, Mr. Fortescue?"

"Nay; I had only the happiness of convincing Messrs. Pater and Son of your genius."

"Oh, you flatterer!" Here ensued again what ancient writers, "&c."

"This is all too delightful to last," sighed Ella, referring, of course, to the situation generally. "As I said before, we shall be ruined by the mere rent of such a paradise as this."

"But we don't pay any rent. The fact is, my dear, though it is true I am as poor as Job, I have married an heiress."

"What do you mean, Walter?"

"Come, there is one surprise I am glad to see that you have not found out for yourself. But hadn't you better take off your bonnet? Very good. You are consumed with curiosity, I see, to know the whole story. When your poor father lay on his death-bed, Ella, he extracted a promise from me. It was very wise and right of him from his point of view, and indeed, as things have turned out, from all points. He had no other object in his mind but the comfort and happiness of his child, and she must never think otherwise. You understand that."

She was trembling very much, and it was easy for her to nod her head, but she could not trust herself to speak. What promise could that have been which her Walter made—and kept, of that she felt certain—at that dreadful far-back time, which just now, however, recurred to her as if it were yesterday?

"I promised your poor father that I would never ask you to marry me unless I had a thousand a year of my own. It was wrong, of course—wrong of me, that is—(for he had felt her start and shudder), since I ought to have known my own incompetence to earn such a sum. I ought to have pleaded with him against the very love that strove to shield you from poverty and discomfort. But I did not do so. I gave my promise. What it cost me to keep it there is no need to talk about. I have been repaid a hundred times for all; and, as I have said, he who imposed it had nothing but your happiness in view. Soon afterwards, thanks to Felspar, who has been our good genius all along, Mr. Aird became aware of—of—what I have just told you. You know how tenderly attached he was to you, and how he strove to show it in his lifetime, though for reasons of your own you would never permit it. That reason, with which he was made acquainted by Felspar, guided his conduct afterwards. When poor little Davey died, for whom of course he had designed his fortune, he made a will which, but for that reason, would without doubt have been in your favour. As it was, he left the bulk of his property, 25,000*l.*, to me, in trust (for so he intended it, though it was not so mentioned) to yourself. Being convinced of our mutual affection, he in fact endowed me with the means of marrying you while still keeping my promise. When I came down with him to Wallington I had, of course, no suspicion of his kind intentions; the first hint of them I received from his own lips, as he lay dying at Clover Cottage, after being brought ashore from the steamer. He whispered to me as I sat beside his bed, 'You are the last man in all the world, Walter, who should have tried to save my worthless life; yet if you had known all you would have done it just the same.' And then he smiled, oh, so tenderly! and bade me kiss you for him when he should be laid with Davey."

There were tears in the eyes of both husband and wife when Walter had got thus far.

"There is no more to tell, my darling," he continued, after a long silence, "except that, of course, I made over the money to you as soon as lawyers could do it; they are not very quick about it, you know, and I couldn't wait, or else perhaps I ought to have told you that you were an heiress before asking you to be my wife. That might have made all the difference, might it not? It was gaining your consent under false pretences. But again, I was obliged to ask you, while I nominally had the money, in order to keep my promise. You see I was in a very awkward position."

At all events he had now exchanged it for a very pleasant one, for there had once more ensued what ancient writers, "*&c. &c.*" It must be remembered that it was but the first week of their honeymoon.

The only guests at the *Ultramarine*, who had been there in the old time were the once suspected bride and her husband; but curiously enough, on the very morning after Ella's arrival at her new home, she received a letter from Mrs. Armytage, written from abroad, and for-

warded to her from Foracre Farm. It was very evident from the contents that she had heard nothing of her marriage or of her engagement to Walter. It appeared to have been written *à propos* of some pictures of Ella's in an illustrated paper which the writer had come across. She complimented her upon them very highly, and held out hopes that on her return from the Continent she might give her a commission. The whole communication was in quite her own manner of patronage and condescension. It, however, contained some news of certain old acquaintances. "You have heard, I suppose, of that idiotic old Mrs. Jennynge's second marriage to the Count Maraschino. She picked him up at Venice, where he represented himself to her as one of its ancient nobility. I hear that he was a pastrycook at Naples. Her money, however, fortunately for her daughter—I have no patience with the woman herself—was settled upon her very tightly. They say he beats her. I hear you have taken up your abode with the Wallaces. They are no doubt worthy people; but Refinement is hardly to be expected at a farm, and you must find it a sad change from your old life. However, as soon as you make money by your profession, which I hear you are in a fair way to do, you will, of course, leave them. I was sorry to learn how shamefully Mr. Aird—or rather Mr. Vernon—had behaved to you. The idea of his coming round that poor old man in his dotage and getting all his money! I think, considering all things, he might have remembered *you*. Mr. Felspar, too, seems by all accounts to have feathered his own nest, which from what I heard of him from Mrs. Jennynge—he behaved most graspingly about a picture—I am not the least surprised at; but of Mr. Vernon I thought better; though indeed what can one expect of a man who has to live by his wits?"

There was a good deal more of it, which made Ella exceedingly angry and Walter absolutely scream with laughter.

After all, however, what does it matter, as she soon persuaded herself, what such people think of one, or even of one's husband. The good opinion of others is worth having only if they themselves are worthy.

At Wallington this happy young couple were surrounded by those who loved them. Mr. Felspar was a constant guest at the Creek. Dr. Cooper used to declare that if he were asked so often to partake of their hospitality, he should be obliged, in justice to his patients, to charge as for a professional visit. Miss Burt had leave from his Highness to see her niece whenever she pleased, and always came laden with grapes and peaches, or the flowers "so beloved by my ancestor, Cardinal York."

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace had a room at Creek Cottage always reserved for them, called the Foracre Room. The good yeoman's wife and Miss Burt struck up a close friendship together, and were never tired of talking of their common darling Ella.

They were speculating one day on what would have happened in case good Mr. Aird had not made things so easy for the young couple.

"Heaven only knows," said Mrs. Wallace; "but I think, somehow,

what *has* happened must have happened sooner or later. Walter and she were made for one another."

"But not ready made," urged Miss Burt, looking up from her lace-work. "The barrier between them, Mr. Vernon has told me, was insurmountable by his own efforts. If I had never believed in a special Providence, the drowning of that dear Mr. Aird would have convinced me of its existence."

Mrs. Wallace, with tears in her eyes for his sad fate, nodded lugubrious assent.

"My belief is, however," continued Miss Burt, "that both Walter and Ella would have found consolation, if not happiness, in another way. He works so hard—even now, when there is no occasion—and loves his work so, that he could never have been a miserable man. His life, as Mr. Felspar told Dr. Cooper, would have been a bright example of what talent—though without positive genius—assiduity and the love of duty can effect, had not this dreadful legacy fallen in and crushed it."

"Then Mr. Felspar ought to be ashamed of himself, and I am very much astonished at him!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace indignantly.

"Well, I am not sure that Mr. Felspar spoke quite seriously," observed Miss Burt apologetically; "that is, as to the legacy. And he's a dear, good man, and, I believe, would sacrifice everything for his friend and Ella."

"I am quite sure of it," said Mrs. Wallace gravely. Then, after a pause, she continued: "You have spoken of what Walter would have done if things had turned out less fortunately for him; but how do you think Ella would have borne it?"

"Bravely. She would have suffered, for she loved him from the first; but I don't think she would have pined away like some young women. I never met with one so diligent, so patient, and yet with such a proper spirit. She would have said to cruel Fate, 'You may do your worst, but I will do my best.'"

"That is quite my view," said Mrs. Wallace with enthusiasm. "And yet she was not brought up with those ideas, was she?"

"Brought up with 'them!' exclaimed Miss Burt, laying down her lacework, and looking very unlike her ordinary self. "She was not indeed; she is 'A Grape from a Thorn.'"

THE END.

The Colours of Flowers.

BEFORE me, as I write, stands a small specimen vase, containing a little Scotch bluebell, picked upon a bleak open moorside, yet wonderfully delicate and fragile in stem, and leaf, and bud, and blossom. For the bluebells of Scotland, the bluebells of Walter Scott and of all the old ballad poetry, are not our stiff, thick-stemmed English wild hyacinths, but the same dainty, drooping flowers which we in the south call harebells. The word ought really to be heather-bell; but the corruption is quite in accordance with a common law of English phonology, which has similarly degraded several other early words by dropping out the *th* between two vowels. Harebell or heather-bell or bluebell, the flower is one of our prettiest and most graceful native forms; and the exquisite depth of its colour has always made it a prime favourite with our poets and our children alike. How it first got that beautiful colour is the problem which I wish, if possible, to settle to-day.

I am not going to inquire at present why the harebell is coloured at all. That question I suppose everybody has now heard answered a dozen times over at least. We all know nowadays that the colours of flowers are useful to them in attracting the insects which fertilise their embryo seeds; and that only those flowers possess bright hues which thus depend upon insects for the impregnation of their ovules. Wind-fertilised blossoms, in which the pollen of one head is carried by chance breezes to the stigma of another, are always small, green, and comparatively inconspicuous. It is only those plants which are indebted to bees or butterflies for the due setting of their seeds that ever advertise their store of honey by bright-hued petals. All this, as I say, we have each of us heard long ago. So the specific question which I wish to attack to-day is not why the harebell is coloured, but why it is coloured blue. And, in getting at the answer to this one test-question, I hope incidentally to answer the wider question why any given flower whatsoever should be blue, let us say, or red, or lilac, rather than orange, yellow, white, or any other possible colour in nature except the one which it actually happens to be.

Briefly put, the general conclusion at which I have arrived is this: all flowers were in their earliest form yellow; then, some of them became white; after that, a few of them grew to be red or purple; and finally a comparatively small number acquired various shades of lilac, mauve, violet, or blue. So that, if this principle be true, the harebell will repre-

sent one of the most highly-developed lines of descent; and its ancestors will have passed successively through all the intermediate stages. Let us see what grounds can be given for such a belief.

In the first place, it is well to observe that when we speak of the colours of flowers we generally mean the colour of the petals alone. For in most cases the stamens and other central organs, which form, botanically speaking, the really important part of the blossom, are yellow, or at least yellowish; while the petals may be blue, red, pink, orange, lilac, or even green. But as the central organs are comparatively small, whereas the petals are large and conspicuous, we naturally speak of flowers in everyday talk as having the colour of their petals, which form by far the greater and most noticeable part of their whole surface. Our question, then, narrows itself down to this—Why are the petals in any particular blossom of one colour rather than another?

Now petals, as I have more than once already explained to the readers of this magazine, are in all probability originally enlarged and flattened stamens, which have been set apart for the special work of attracting insects. It seems likely that all flowers at first consisted of the central organs alone—that is to say, the pistil, which contains the ovary with its embryo seeds; and the stamens, which produce the pollen, whose co-operation is necessary in order to fertilise these same embryo ovules and to make the pistil mature into the ripe fruit. But in those plants which took to fertilisation by means of insects—or, one ought rather to say, in those plants which insects took to visiting for the sake of their honey or pollen, and so unconsciously fertilising—the flowers soon began to produce an outer row of barren and specialised stamens, adapted by their size and colour for attracting the fertilising insects; and these barren and specialised stamens are what we commonly call petals. Any flowers which thus presented brilliant masses of colour to allure the eyes of the beetles, the bees, and the butterflies would naturally receive the greatest number of visits from their insect friends, and would therefore stand the best chance of setting their seeds, as well as of producing healthy and vigorous offspring as the result of a proper cross. In this way, they would gain an advantage in the struggle for life over their less fortunate compeers, and would hand down their own peculiarities to their descendants after them.

But as the stamens of almost all flowers, certainly of all the oldest and simplest flowers, are yellow, it would naturally follow that the earliest petals would be yellow too. When the stamens of the outer row were flattened and broadened into petals, there would be no particular reason why they should change their colour; and, in the absence of any good reason, they doubtless retained it as before. Indeed, I shall try to show, a little later on, that the earliest and simplest types of existing flowers are almost always yellow, seldom white, and never blue; and this in itself would be a sufficient ground for believing that yellow was

the original colour of all petals.* But as I am personally somewhat heretical in believing, contrary to the general run of existing scientific opinion, that petals are derived from flattened stamens, not from simplified and attenuated leaves, I shall venture to detail here the reasons for this belief; because it seems to me of capital importance in connection with our present subject. For if the petals were originally a row of stamens set apart for the function of attracting insects, it would be natural and obvious why they should begin by being yellow; but if they were originally a set of leaves, which became thinner and more brightly coloured for the same purpose, it would be difficult to see why they should first have assumed any one colour rather than another.

The accepted doctrine as to the nature of petals is that discovered by Wolff and afterwards rediscovered by Goethe, after whose name it is usually called; for of course, as in all such cases, the greater man's fame has swallowed up the fame of the lesser. Goethe held that all the parts of the flower were really modified leaves, and that a gradual transition could be traced between them, from the ordinary leaf through the stem-leaf and the bract to the sepal (or division of the calyx), the petal, the stamen, and the ovary or carpel. Now, if we look at most modern flowers, such a transition can undoubtedly be observed; and sometimes it is very delicately graduated, so that you can hardly say where each sort of leaf merges into the next. But, unfortunately for the truth of the theory as ordinarily understood, we now know that in the earliest flowers there were no petals or sepals, but that primitive flowering plants had simply leaves on the one hand, and stamens and ovules on the other. The oldest types of flowers at present surviving, those of the pine tribe and of the tropical cycads (such as the well-known *zamias* of our conservatories), have still only these simple elements. But, if petals and sepals are later in origin (as we know them to be) than stamens and carpels, we cannot say, it seems to me, that they mark the transition from one form to the other, any more than we can say that Gothic architecture marks

* In a part of this article I shall have to go over ground already considered in a valuable paper read by Sir John Lubbock before the British Association at York last August, and I shall take part of my examples from his interesting collection of facts as reported in *Nature*. But, at the same time, I should like at the outset to point out that I venture to differ on two points from his great authority. In the first place, I do not think all flowers were originally green, because I believe petals were first derived from altered stamens, not from altered sepals or bracts, and that modern green flowers are degraded types, not survivals, of early forms. And in the second place, I think yellow petals preceded white petals in the order of time, and not *vice versa*. I may also perhaps be excused for adding that I had already arrived at most of the substantive conclusions set forth in this article before the appearance of Sir John Lubbock's paper, and had incidentally put forward the greater part of them, though dogmatically and without fully stating my reasons, in an article on the "Daisy's Pedigree," published in the *CORNHILL MAGAZINE*, and in another on the *Rose Family*, published in *Belgravia*, both for August, 1881. At the same time, I must express my indebtedness for many new details to Sir John Lubbock's admirable paper. Of course this note is only appended for the behoof of scientific readers.

the transition from the Egyptian style to the classical Greek. I do not mean to deny that the stamen and the ovary are themselves by origin modified leaves—that part of the Wolfian theory is absolutely irrefutable—but what I do mean to say is this, that, with the light shed upon the subject by the modern doctrine of evolution, we can no longer regard petals and sepals as intermediate stages between the two. The earliest flowering plants had true leaves on the one hand, and specialised pollen-bearing or ovule-bearing leaves on the other hand, which latter are what we call stamens and carpels; but they had no petals at all, and the petals of modern flowers have been produced at some later period. I believe, also, they have been produced by a modification of certain external stamens, not by a modification of true leaves. Instead of being leaves arrested on their way towards becoming stamens, they are stamens which have partially reverted towards the condition of leaves. They differ from true leaves, however, in their thin, spongy texture, and in the bright pigments with which they are adorned.

All stamens show a great tendency easily to become petaloid, as the technical botanists call it; that is to say, to flatten out their filament or stalk, and finally to lose their pollen-bearing sacs or anthers. In the waterlilies—which are one of the oldest and simplest types of flowers we now possess, still preserving many antique points of structure unchanged—we can trace a regular gradation from the perfect stamen to the perfect petal. In the centre of the flower, we find stamens of the ordinary sort, with rounded stalks or filaments, and long yellow anthers full of pollen at the end of each; then, as we move outward, we find the filaments growing flatter and broader, and the pollen-sacs less and less perfect; next, we find a few stamens which look exactly like petals, only that they have two abortive anthers stuck awkwardly on to their summits; and, finally, we find true petals, broad and flat, yellow or white as the case may be, and without any trace of the anthers at all. Here in this very ancient flower we have stereotyped for us, as it were, the mode in which stamens first developed into petals, under stress of insect selection.

“But how do you know,” some one may ask, “that the transition was not in the opposite direction? How do you know that the waterlily had not petals alone to start with, and that these did not afterwards develop, as the Wolfian hypothesis would have us believe, into stamens?” Well, for a very simple reason. The theory of Wolff and Goethe is quite incompatible with the doctrine of development, at least if accepted as a historical explanation (which Wolff and Goethe of course never meant it to be). Flowers can and do exist without petals, which are no essential part of the organism, but a mere set of attractive coloured advertisements for alluring insects; but no flower can possibly exist without stamens, which are one of the two essential reproductive organs in the plant. Without pollen, no flower can set its seeds. A parallel from the animal world will make this immediately obvious. Hive-bees consist of three kinds—the queens or fertile females, the drones or males,

and the workers or neuters. Now it would be absurd to ask whether the queens were developed from an original class of neuters, or the neuters from an original class of fertile females. Neuters left to themselves would die out in a single generation: they are really sterilised females, set apart for a special function on behalf of the hive. It is just the same with petals: they are sterilised stamens, set apart for the special function of attracting insects on behalf of the entire flower. But to ask which came first, the petals or the stamens, is as absurd as to ask which came first, the male and female bees or the neuters.*

In many other cases besides the waterlily, we know that stamens often turn into petals. Thus the numerous coloured rays of the mesembryanthemums or ice-plant family are acknowledged to be flattened stamens. In double roses and almost all other double flowers the extra petals are produced from the stamens of the interior. In short, stamens generally can be readily converted into petals, especially in rich and fertile soils or under cultivation. Even where stamens always retain their pollen-sacs, they have often broad, flattened petaloid filaments, as in the star of Bethlehem and many other flowers. Looking at the question as a whole, we can see how petals might easily have taken their origin from stamens, while it is difficult to understand how they could have taken their origin from ordinary leaves—a process of which, if it ever took place, no hint now remains to us. We shall see hereafter that the manner in which certain outer florets in the compound flower-heads of the daisy or the aster have been sterilised [and specialised for the work of attraction affords an exact analogy to the manner in which it is here suggested that certain stamens may at an earlier date have been sterilised and specialised for the same purpose, thus giving rise to what we know as petals.

We may take it for granted, then (to return from this long but needful digression), that the earliest petals were derived from flattened stamens, and were therefore probably yellow in colour, like the stamens from which they took their origin. The question next arises—How did some of them afterwards come to be orange, red, purple, or blue?

A few years ago, when the problem of the connection between flowers and insects still remained much in the state where Sprengel left it at the end of the last century, it would have seemed quite impossible to answer this question. But nowadays after the full researches of Darwin, Wallace, Lubbock, and Hermann Müller into the subject, we can give a very satisfactory solution indeed. We now know, not only that the colours of flowers as a whole are intended to attract insects in general, but that certain colours are definitely intended to attract certain special kinds of insects. Thus, to take a few examples only out of hundreds that might be cited, the flowers which lay themselves out for fertilisation by miscellaneous

* I must add that I do not in the least doubt the truth of Wolff's great generalisation in the way in which he meant it—the existence of a homology between the leaf and all the floral organs: I only mean that the conception requires to be modified a little by the light of later evolutionary discoveries.

small flies are almost always white ; those which depend upon the beetles are generally yellow ; while those which bid for the favour of bees and butterflies are usually red, purple, lilac, or blue. Certain insects always visit one species of flower alone ; and others pass from blossom to blossom of one kind only on a single day, though they may vary a little from kind to kind as the season advances, and one species replaces another. Müller, the most statistical of naturalists, has noticed that while bees form seventy-five per cent. of the insects visiting the very developed composites, they form only fourteen per cent. of those visiting umbelliferous plants, which have, as a rule, open but by no means showy white flowers. Certain blossoms which lay themselves out to attract wasps are, as he quaintly puts it, "obviously adapted to a less æsthetically cultivated circle of visitors." And some livid red flowers actually resemble in their colour and odour decaying raw meat, thus inducing bluebottle flies to visit them and so carry their pollen from head to head.

Down to the minutest distinctions between species, this correlation of flowers to the tastes of their particular guests seems to hold good. Hermann Müller notes that the common galium of our heaths and hedges is white, and therefore visited by small flies ; while the lady's bedstraw, its near relative, is yellow, and owes its fertilisation to little beetles. Mr. H. O. Forbes counted on one occasion the visits he saw paid to the flowers on a single bank ; and he found that a particular bumble-bee sucked the honey of thirty purple dead-nettles in succession, passing over without notice all the other plants in the neighbourhood ; two other species of bumble-bee and a cabbage-butterfly also patronised the same dead-nettles exclusively. Fritz Müller noticed a *lantana* in South America which changes colour as its flowering advances ; and he observed that each kind of butterfly which visited it stuck rigidly to its own favourite colour, waiting to pay its addresses until that colour appeared. Mr. Darwin cut off the petals of a *lobelia* and found that the hive-bees never went near it, though they were very busy with the surrounding flowers. But perhaps Sir John Lubbock's latest experiments on bees are the most conclusive of all. He had long ago convinced himself, by trials with honey placed on slips of glass above yellow, pink, or blue paper, that bees could discriminate the different colours ; and he has now shown in the same way that they display a marked preference for blue over all others. The fact is, blue flowers are, as a rule, specialised for fertilisation by bees, and bees therefore prefer this colour ; while conversely the flowers have at the same time become blue because that was the colour which the bees prefer. As in most other cases, the adaptation must have gone on *pari passu* on both sides. As the bee-flowers grew bluer, the bees must have grown fonder and fonder of blue ; and as they grew fonder of blue, they must have more and more constantly preferred the bluest flowers.

We thus see how the special tastes of insects may have become the selective agency for developing white, pink, red, purple, and blue petals

from the original yellow ones. But before they could exercise such a selective action, the petals must themselves have shown some tendency to vary in certain fixed directions. How could such an original tendency arise? For, of course, if the insects never saw any pink, purple, or blue petals, they could not specially favour and select them; so that we are as yet hardly nearer the solution of the problem than ever.

Here Mr. Sorby, who has chemically studied the colouring matter of leaves and flowers far more deeply than any other investigator, supplies us with a useful hint. He tells us that the various pigments of bright petals are already contained in the ordinary tissues of the plant, whose juices only need to be slightly modified in chemical constitution in order to make them into the blues, pinks, and purples with which we are so familiar. "The coloured substances in the petals," he says, "are in many cases exactly the same as those in the foliage from which chlorophyll has disappeared; so that the petals are often exactly like leaves which have turned yellow and red in autumn, or the very yellow or red leaves of early spring." "The colour of many crimson, pink, and red flowers is due to the development of substances belonging to the erythrophyll group, and not unfrequently to exactly the same kind as that so often found in leaves. The facts seem to indicate that these various substances may be due to an alteration of the normal constituents of leaves. So far as I have been able to ascertain, their development seems as if related to extra oxidation, modified by light and other varying conditions not yet understood."

The different hues assumed by petals are all thus, as it were, laid up beforehand in the tissues of the plant, ready to be brought out at a moment's notice. And all flowers, as we know, easily sport a little in colour. But the question is, do their changes tend to follow any regular and definite order? Is there any reason to believe that the modification runs from yellow through red to blue, rather than *vice versa*? I believe there is; and we get hints of it in the following fashion.

One of our common little English forget-me-nots, by name *Myosotis versicolor* (may I be pardoned for using a few scientific names just this once?) is pale yellow when it first opens; but as it grows older, it becomes faintly pinkish, and ends by being blue like the others of its race. Now, this sort of colour-change is by no means uncommon; and in all the cases that I know of it is always in the same direction, from yellow or white, through pink, orange, or red, to purple or blue. For example, one of the wall-flower tribe, *Cheiranthus chamaeleo*, has at first a whitish flower, then a citron-yellow, and finally emerges into red or violet. The petals of *Stylidium fruticosum* are pale yellow to begin with, and afterwards become light rose-coloured. An evening primrose, *Oenothera tetraptera*, has white flowers in its first stage and red ones at a later period of development. *Cobaea scandens* goes from white to violet; *Hibiscus mutabilis* from white through flesh-coloured to red. Fritz Müller's lantana is yellow on its first day, orange on the second, and purple on

the third. The whole tribe of borages begin by being pink and end with being blue. The garden convolvulus opens a blushing white and passes into full purple. In all these and many other cases the general direction of the changes is the same. They are usually set down as due to oxidation of the pigmentary matter.

If this be so, there is a good reason why bees should be specially fond of blue, and why blue flowers should be specially adapted for fertilisation by their aid. For Mr. A. R. Wallace has shown that colour is most apt to appear or to vary in those parts of plants or animals which have undergone the highest amount of modification. The markings of the peacock and the argus pheasant come out upon their immensely developed secondary tail-feathers or wing-plumes; the metallic hues of sun-birds and humming-birds show themselves upon their highly-specialised crests, gorgets, or lappets. It is the same with the hackles of fowls, the head-ornaments of fruit-pigeons, and the bills of toucans. The most exquisite colours in the insect world are those which are developed on the greatly expanded and delicately-feathered wings of butterflies; and the eye-spots which adorn a few species are usually found on their very highly modified swallow-tail appendages. So, too, with flowers; those which have undergone most modification have their colours most profoundly altered. In this way, we may put it down as a general rule (to be tested hereafter) that the least developed flowers are usually yellow or white; those which have undergone a little more modification are usually pink or red; and those which have been most highly specialised of any are usually purple, lilac, or blue. Absolute deep ultramarine, like that of this harebell, probably marks the highest level of all.

On the other hand, Mr. Wallace's principle also explains why the bees and butterflies should prefer these specialised colours to all others, and should therefore select the flowers which display them by preference over any less developed types. For bees and butterflies are the most highly adapted of all insects to honey-seeking and flower-feeding. They have themselves on their side undergone the largest amount of specialisation for that particular function. And if the more specialised and modified flowers, which gradually fitted their forms and the position of their honey-glands to the forms of the bees or butterflies, showed a natural tendency to pass from yellow through pink and red to purple and blue, it would follow that the insects which were being evolved side by side with them, and which were aiding at the same time in their evolution, would grow to recognise these developed colours as the visible symbols of those flowers from which they could obtain the largest amount of honey with the least possible trouble. Thus it would finally result that the ordinary unspecialised flowers, which depended upon small insect ruff-raff, would be mostly left yellow or white; those which appealed to rather higher insects would become pink or red; and those which laid themselves out for bees and butterflies, the aristocrats of the arthropodous world, would grow for the most part to be purple or blue.

Now, this is very much what we actually find to be the case in nature. The simplest and earliest flowers are those with regular, symmetrical, open cups, which can be visited by any insects whatsoever; and these are in large part yellow or white. A little higher are the flowers with more or less closed cups, whose honey can only be reached by more specialised insects; and these are oftener pink or reddish. More profoundly modified are those irregular one-sided flowers, which have assumed special shapes to accommodate bees or other specific honey-seekers; and these are often purple and not infrequently blue. Highly specialised in another way are the flowers whose petals have all coalesced into a tubular corolla; and these might almost be said to be usually purple or blue. And, finally, highest of all are the flowers whose tubular corolla has been turned to one side, thus combining the united petals with the irregular shape; and these are almost invariably purple or blue. I shall proceed in the sequel to give examples.

One may say that the most profoundly modified of all existing flowers are the families of the composites, the labiates, the snapdragons, and the orchids. Now these are exactly the families in which blue and purple flowers are commonest; while in all of them, except the composites, white flowers are rare, and unmixed yellow flowers almost unknown. But perhaps the best way to test the principle will be to look at one or two families in detail, remembering of course that we can only expect approximate results, owing to the natural complexity of the conditions. Not to overburden the subject with unfamiliar names I shall seldom go beyond the limits of our own native English flora.

The roses form a most instructive family to begin with. As a whole they are not very highly developed, since all of them have simple, open, symmetrical flowers, generally with five distinct petals. But of all the rose tribe, as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere, the potentilla group, including our common English cinquefoils and silver-weed, seem to make up the most central, simple, and primitive members. They are chiefly low, creeping weeds, and their flowers are of the earliest pattern, without any specialisation of form, or any peculiar adaptation to insect visitors. Now among the potentilla group, nearly all the blossoms are yellow, as are also those of the other early allied forms such as agrimony and herb-bennet. Almost the only white potentillas in England are the barren strawberry and the true strawberry, which have diverged more than any other species from the norma of the race. Water-avens, however, a close relative of herb-bennet, has a dusky purplish tinge; and Sir John Lubbock notes that it secretes honey, and is far oftener visited by insects than its kinsman. The bramble tribe, including the blackberry, raspberry, and dewberry, have much larger flowers than the potentillas, and are very greatly frequented by winged visitors. Their petals are pure white, often with a pinky tinge, especially on big, well-grown blossoms. But there is one low, little-developed member of the blackberry group, the stone-bramble, with narrow, inconspicuous petals of a greenish-

yellow, merging into dirty white; and this humble form seems to preserve for us the transitional stage from the yellow potentilla to the true white brambles. One step higher, the cherries, apples, and pears have very large and expanded petals, white toward the centre, but blushing at the edges into rosy pink or bright red. Finally, the true roses, whose flowers are the most developed of all, have usually extremely broad pink petals (like those of our own dog-rose), which in some still bigger exotic species become crimson or damask of the deepest dye. They are more sought after by insects than any others of their family.

At the same time, the roses as a whole, being a relatively simple family, with regular symmetrical flowers of the separate type, have never risen to the stage of producing blue petals. That is why our florists cannot turn out a blue rose. It is easy enough to make roses or any other blossoms vary within their own natural limits, revert to any earlier form or colour through which they have previously passed; but it is difficult or impossible to make them take a step which they have never yet naturally taken. Hence florists generally find the most developed flowers are also the most variable and plastic in colour; and hence, too, we can get red, pink, white, straw-coloured, or yellow roses, but not blue ones. This, I believe, is the historical truth underlying De Candolle's division of flowers into a xanthic and a cyanic series.

Still more interesting, because covering a wider range of colour, are the buttercup family, whose petals vary from yellow to every shade of crimson, purple, and blue. Here, the simplest and least differentiated members of the group are the common meadow buttercups, which, as everybody knows, have five open petals of a brilliant golden hue. Nowhere else is the exact accordance in colour between stamens and petals more noticeable than in these flowers. There are two kinds of buttercup in England, however, which show us the transition from yellow to white actually taking place under our very eyes. These are the water-crowfoot and its close ally the ivy-leaved crowfoot, whose petals are still faintly yellow toward the centre, but fade away into primrose and white as they approach the edge. The clematis and anemone, which are more highly developed, have white sepals (for the petals here are suppressed), even in our English species; and exotic kinds varying from pink to purple are cultivated in our flower-gardens. Columbines are very specialised forms of the buttercup type, both sepals and petals being brightly coloured, while the former organs are produced above into long, bow-shaped spurs, each of which secretes a drop of honey; and various columbines accordingly range from red to purple and dark blue. Even the columbine, however, though so highly specialised, is not bilaterally but circularly symmetrical. This last and highest mode of adaptation to insect visits is found in larkspur, and still more developed in the curious monkshood. Now larkspur is usually blue, though white or red blossoms sometimes occur by reversion; while monkshood is one of the deepest blue flowers we possess. Sir John Lubbock has shown that a

particular bumble-bee (*Bombus hortorum*) is the only North European insect capable of fertilising the larkspur.

The violets are a whole family of bilateral flowers, highly adapted to fertilisation by insects, and as a rule they are blue. Here, too, however, white varieties easily arise by reversion; while one member of the group, the common pansy, is perhaps the most variable flower in all nature.

Pinks do not display so wide a range in either direction. They begin as high up as white, and never get any higher than red or carnation. The small, undeveloped field species, such as the chickweeds, stitchworts, and cornspuries, have open flowers of very primitive character, and almost all of them are white. They are fertilised by miscellaneous small flies. But the campions and true pinks have a tubular calyx, and the petals are raised on long claws, while most of them also display special adaptations for a better class of insect fertilisation in the way of fringes or crowns on the petals. These higher kinds are generally pink or red. Our own beautiful purple English corn-cockle is a highly developed campion, so specialised that only butterflies can reach its honey with their long tongues, as the nectaries are situated at the bottom of the tube. Two other species of campion, however, show us interestingly the way in which variations of colour may occur in a retrograde direction even among highly evolved forms. One of them, the day lychnis, has red, scentless flowers, opening in the morning, and it is chiefly fertilised by diurnal butterflies. But its descendant, the night lychnis, has taken to fertilisation by means of moths; and as moths can only see white flowers, it has become white, and has acquired a faint perfume as an extra attraction. Still, the change has not yet become fully organised in the species, for one may often find a night lychnis at the present time which is only pale pink, instead of being pure white.

The only other family of flowers with separate petals which I shall consider here is that of the pea-blossoms. These are all bilateral in shape, as everybody knows; but the lower and smaller species, such as the medick, lotus, and lady's fingers, are usually yellow. So also are broom and gorse. Among the more specialised clovers, some of which are fertilised by bees alone, white, red, and purple predominate. Even with the smaller and earlier types, the most developed species, like lucerne, are likewise purple. But in the largest and most advanced types, the peas, beans, vetches, and scarlet runners, we get much brighter and deeper colours, often with more or less tinge of blue. In the sweet-peas and many others, the standard frequently differs in hue from the keel or the wings—a still further advance in heterogeneity of colouration. Lupines, sainfoin, everlasting pea, and wistaria are highly-evolved members of the same family, in which purple, lilac, mauve, or blue tints become distinctly pronounced.

When we pass on, however, to the flowers in which (as in this harebell) the petals have all coalesced into a tubular or campanulate corolla,

we get even more striking results. Here, where the very shape at once betokens high modification, yellow is a comparatively rare colour (especially as a ground-tone, though it often comes out in spots or patches), while purple and blue, so rare elsewhere, become almost the rule. For example, in the great family of the heaths, which is highly adapted to insect fertilisation, more particularly by bees, purple and blue are the prevailing tints, so much so that, as we all have noticed a hundred times over, they often colour whole tracts of hillside together. So far as I know, there are no really yellow heaths at all. The bell-shaped blossoms mark at once the position of the heaths with reference to insects; and the order, according to Mr. Bentham, supplies us with more ornamental plants than any other in the whole world.

It is the same with the families allied to my harebell here. They are, in fact, for the most part larger and handsomer blossoms of the same type as the heaths; and the greater number of them, like the harebell itself and the Canterbury bell, are deep blue. Rampion and sheep's bit, also blue, are clustered heads of similar blossoms. The little blue lobelia of our borders, which is bilateral as well as tubular, belongs to a closely related tribe. Not far from them are the lilac scabious, the blue devil's bit, and the mauve teasel. Amongst all these very highly-evolved groups blue distinctly forms the prevalent colour.

The composites, to which belong the daisies and dandelions, also give us some extremely striking evidence. Each flower-head here consists of a number of small florets, crowded together so as to resemble a single blossom. So far as our present purpose is concerned, they fall naturally into three groups. The first is that of the dandelions and hawkweeds, with open florets, fertilised, as a rule, by very small insects; and these are generally yellow, with only a very few divergent species. The second is that of the thistle-heads, visited by an immense number of insects, including the bees; and these are almost all purple, while some highly-evolved species, like the corn-flower or bluebottle and the true artichoke, are bright blue. The third is that of the daisies and asters, with tubular central florets and long, flattened outer rays; and these demand a closer examination here.

The central florets of the daisy tribe, as a rule, are bright golden; a fact which shows pretty certainly that they are descended from a common ancestor who was also yellow. Moreover, these yellow florets are bell-shaped, and each contain a pistil and five stamens, like any other perfect flower. But the outer florets are generally sterile; and instead of being bell-shaped they are split down one side and unrolled, so as to form a long ray; while their corolla is at the same time much larger than that of the central blossoms. In short, they are sterilised members of the compound flower-head, specially set apart for the work of display; and thus they stand to the entire flower-head in the same relation as petals do to the simple original flower. The analogy between the two is complete. Just as the petal is a specialised and sterilised stamen told off

to do duty as an allurer of insects for the benefit of the whole flower, so the ray-floret is a specialised and sterilised blossom told off to do the self-same duty for the benefit of the group of tiny flowers which make up the composite flower-head.

Now, the earliest ray-florets would naturally be bright yellow, like the tubular blossoms of the central disk from which they sprang. And to this day the ray-florets of the simplest daisy types, such as the corn-marigold, the sunflower, and the ragwort, are yellow like the central flowers. In the camomile, however, the ox-eye daisy, and the may-weed, the rays have become white; and this, I think, fairly establishes the fact that white is a higher development of colour than yellow; for the change must have been made in order to attract special insects. Certainly, such a differentiation of the flowers in a single head cannot be without a good purpose. In the true daisy, again, the white rays become tipped with pink, which sometimes rises almost to rose-colour; and this stage is exactly analogous to that of apple-blossom, which similarly halts on the way from white petals to red. In the asters and Michaelmas daisies we get a further advance to purple, lilac, and mauve, while both in these and in the chrysanthemums true shades of blue not infrequently appear. The cinerarias of our gardeners are similar forms of highly-developed groundsels from the Canary Islands.

I must pass over the blue tubular gentians and periwinkles, with many other like cases, for I can only find room for two more families. One of these, the borage kind, has highly-modified flowers, with a tube below and spreading lobes above; in addition to which most of the species possess remarkable and strongly-developed appendages to the corolla, in the way of teeth, crowns, hairs, scales, parapets, or valves. Of the common British species alone, the forget-me-nots are clear sky-blue with a yellow eye; the viper's bugloss is at first reddish-purple, and afterwards a deep blue; the lungwort is also dark blue; and so are the two alkanets, the true bugloss, the madwort, and the familiar borage of our claret-cup, though all of them by reversion occasionally produce purple or white flowers. Houndstongue is purple-red, and most of the other species vary between purple and blue; indeed throughout the family most flowers are red at first and blue as they mature. Of these, borage at least is habitually fertilised by bees, and I believe the same to be partially true of many of the other species. The second highly-evolved family to which I wish to draw attention is that of the labiates—perhaps the most specialised of any so far as regards insect fertilisation. Not only are they tubular, but they are very bilateral and irregular indeed, displaying more modification of form than any other flowers except the orchids. Almost all of them are purple or blue. Among the best known English species are thyme, mint, marjoram, sage, and basil, which I need hardly say are great favourites with bees. Ground-ivy is bright blue; catmint, pale blue; prunella, violet-purple; and common bugle, blue or

flesh-colour. Many of the others are purple or purplish.* It must be added that in both these families the flowers are very liable to vary within the limit of the same species; and red, white, or purple specimens are common in all the normally blue kinds.

Sometimes, indeed, we may say that the new colour has not yet begun to fix itself in the species, but that the hue still varies under our very eyes. Of this the little milkwort (a plant of the type with separate petals) affords an excellent example, for it is occasionally white, usually pink, and not infrequently blue; so that in all probability it is now actually in course of acquiring a new colour. Much the same thing happens with the common pimpernel. Its ancestral form is probably the woodland loosestrife, which is yellow; but pimpernel itself is usually orange-red, while a blue variety is frequent on the Continent, and sometimes appears in England as well. Every botanist can add half a dozen equally good instances from his own memory.

So far I have spoken only of what the ladies would call self-colour, as though every flower were of one unvaried hue throughout. I must now add a few words on the subject of the spots and lines which so often variegate the petals in certain species. On this subject, again, Mr. Wallace's hint is full of meaning. Everywhere in nature, he points out, spots and eyes of colour appear on the most highly-modified parts, and this rule applies most noticeably to the case of petals. Simple regular flowers, like the buttercups and roses, hardly ever have any spots or lines; but in very modified forms like the labiates and the orchids they are extremely common. The scrophularineous family, to which the snapdragon belongs, is one most specially adapted to insects, and even more irregular than that of the labiates; and here we find the most singular effects produced by dappling and mixture of colours. The simple yellow mullein, it is true, has no such spots or lines, nor have even many of the much higher blue veronicas; but in the snapdragons, the foxglove, the toadflax, the ivy-linaria, the eyebright, and the calceolarias, the intimate mixture of colours is very noticeable. In the allied tropical bignonias and gloxinias we see much the same distribution of hues. Many of the family are cultivated in gardens on account of their bizarre and fantastic shapes and colours. As to the orchids, I need hardly say anything about their wonderfully spotted and variegated flowers. Even in our small English kinds the dappling is extremely marked, especially upon the expanded and profoundly modified lower lip; but in the larger tropical varieties the patterns are often quaint and even startling in their extraordinary richness of fancy and apparent capriciousness of design. Mr. Darwin has shown that their adaptations to insects are more intimate and more marvellous than those of any other flowers whatsoever.

Structurally speaking, the spots and lines on petals seem to be the

* Our English archangels and a few others are yellow. Such cases of reversion are not uncommon, and are doubtless due to special insect selection in a retrograde direction.

direct result of high modification ; but functionally, as Sprengel long ago pointed out, they act as honey-guides, and for this purpose they have no doubt undergone special selection by the proper insects. Lines are comparatively rare on regular flowers, but they tend to appear as soon as the flower becomes even slightly bilateral, and they point directly towards the nectaries. The geranium family affords an excellent illustration of this law. The regular forms are mostly uniform in hue ; but many of the South African pelargoniums, cultivated in gardens and hot-houses, are slightly bilateral, the two upper petals standing off from the three lower ones ; and these two become at once marked with dark lines, which are in some cases scarcely visible, and in others fairly pronounced. From this simple beginning one can trace a gradual progress in heterogeneity of colouring, till at last the most developed bilateral forms have the two upper petals of quite a different hue from the three lower ones, besides being deeply marked with belts and spots of dappled colour. In the allied *tropæolum* or Indian cress (the so-called nasturtium of old-fashioned gardens—though the plant is really no more related to the water-cress and other true nasturtiums than we ourselves are to the great kangaroo) this tendency is carried still further. Here, the calyx is prolonged into a deep spur, containing the honey, inaccessible to any but a few large insects ; and towards this spur all the lines on the petals converge. Sir John Lubbock observes that without such conventional marks to guide them, bees would waste a great deal of time in bungling about the mouths of flowers ; for they are helpless, blundering things at an emergency, and never know their way twice to the same place if any change has been made in the disposition of the familiar surroundings.

Finally, there remains the question—why have some flowers green petals ? This is a difficult problem to attack at the end of a long paper ; and indeed it is one of little interest for ninety-nine people out of a hundred ; since the flowers with green petals are mostly so small and inconspicuous that nobody but a professional botanist ever troubles his head about them. The larger part of the world is somewhat surprised to learn that there are such things as green flowers at all ; though really they are far commoner than the showy coloured ones. Nevertheless, lest I should seem to be shirking a difficulty altogether, I shall add that I believe green petals to be in almost every case degraded representatives of earlier yellow or white ones. This belief is clean contrary to the accepted view, which represents the green wind-fertilised blossoms as older in order of time than their coloured insect-fertilised allies. Nevertheless, I think all botanists will allow that such green or greenish flowers as the hellebores, the plantains, the lady's mantle, the salad-burnet, the moschatel, the twayblade, and the parsley-piert are certainly descended from bright-hued ancestors, and have lost their colours or their petals through acquiring the habit of wind-fertilisation or self-fertilisation. Starting from these, I can draw no line as I go downward in the scale

through such flowers as knawel, goosefoot, dog's mercury, nettle, and arrowgrass, till I get to absolutely degraded blossoms like glasswort, calitriche, and pondweed, whose real nature nobody but a botanist would ever suspect. Whether the catkins, the grasses, and the sedges were ever provided with petals I do not venture to guess; but certainly wherever we find the merest rudiment of a perianth I am compelled to believe that the plant has descended from bright-coloured ancestors, however remotely. And when we look at the very degraded blossoms of the spuries, which we know by the existence of intermediate links to be derived from perianth-bearing forefathers, the possibility at least of this being also true of catkins and grasses cannot be denied. So far as I can see, the conifers and cycads are the only flowering plants which we can be quite sure never possessed coloured and attractive petals. But this digression is once more only intended for the scientifically-minded reader.

If the general principle here put forward is true, the special colours of different flowers are due to no mere spontaneous accident, nay, even to no meaningless caprice of the fertilising insects. They are due in their inception to a regular law of progressive modification; and they have been fixed and stereotyped in each species by the selective action of the proper beetles, bees, moths, or butterflies. Not only can we say why such a colour, once happening to appear, has been favoured in the struggle for existence, but also why that colour should ever make its appearance in the first place, which is a condition precedent to its being favoured or selected at all. For example, blue pigments are often found in the most highly-developed flowers, because blue pigments are a natural product of high modification—a simple chemical outcome of certain extremely complex biological changes. On the other hand, bees show a marked taste for blue, because blue is the colour of the most advanced flowers; and by always selecting such where possible, they both keep up and sharpen their own taste, and at the same time give additional opportunities to the blue flowers, which thus ensure proper fertilisation. I believe it ought always to be the object of naturalists in this manner to show not only why such and such a "spontaneous" variation should have been favoured whenever it occurred, but also to show why and how it could ever have occurred at all.

GRANT ALLEN.

How the Stars got their Names.

ARTEMUS WARD used to say that, while there were many things in the science of astronomy hard to be understood, there was one fact which entirely puzzled him. He could partly perceive how we "weigh the sun," and ascertain the component elements of the heavenly bodies, by the aid of *spectrum* analysis. "But what beats me about the stars," he observed plaintively, "is how we come to know their names." This question, or rather the somewhat similar question, "How did the constellations come by their very peculiar names?" has puzzled Professor Pritchard and other astronomers more serious than Artemus Ward. Why is a group of stars called the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Twins*, or named after the *Pleiades*, the fair daughters of the Giant Atlas? These are difficulties that meet even children, when they examine a "celestial globe." There they find the figure of a bear, traced out with lines in the intervals between the stars of the constellations, while a very imposing giant is so drawn that Orion's belt just fits his waist. But when he comes to look at the heavens, the infant speculator sees no sort of likeness to a bear in the stars, nor anything at all resembling a giant in the neighbourhood of Orion. The most eccentric modern fancy which can detect what shapes it will in clouds, is unable to find any likeness to human or animal forms in the stars, and yet we call a great many of the stars by the names of men, and beasts, and gods. Some resemblance to terrestrial things, it is true, every one can behold in the heavens. *Corona*, for example, is like a crown, or, as the Australian black fellows know, it is like a boomerang, and we can understand why they give it the name of that curious curved missile. The *Milky Way*, again, does resemble a path in the sky; our English ancestors called it *Watling Street*—the path of the Watlings, mythical giants—and Bushmen in Africa and Red Men in North America name it the "ashen path." The ashes of the path, of course, are supposed to be hot and glowing, not dead and black, like the ash-paths of modern running grounds. Other and more recent names for certain constellations are also intelligible. In Homer's time the Greeks had two names for the *Great Bear*; they called it the *Bear*, or the *Wain*; and a certain fanciful likeness to a wain may be made out, though no resemblance to a bear is manifest. In the United States the same constellation is popularly styled the *Dipper*, and every one may observe the likeness to a dipper, or toddyladle. But these resemblances take us only a little way towards

learning how the constellations obtained their human and animal appellations. We know that we derive many of the names straight from the Greek, but whence did the Greeks get them? On this subject Goguet, the author of *L'Origine des Lois*, a rather learned but too speculative work of the last century, makes the following characteristic remarks: "The Greeks received their astronomy from Prometheus. This prince, as far as history teaches us, made his observations on Mount Caucasus." That was the eighteenth century's method of interpreting mythology. The myth preserved in *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, tells us that Zeus crucified the Titan on Mount Caucasus. The French philosopher, rejecting the supernatural elements of the tale, makes up his mind that Prometheus was a prince of a scientific bent, and that he established his observatory on the frosty Caucasus. But, even admitting this, why did Prometheus give the stars animal names? Our author easily explains this by a hypothetical account of the manners of primitive men. "The earliest peoples," he says, "must have used writing for purposes of astronomical science. They would be content to design the constellations of which they wished to speak by the hieroglyphical symbols of their names; hence the constellations have insensibly taken the names of the chief symbols." Thus, a drawing of a bear or a swan was the hieroglyphic of the name of a star, or group of stars. But whence came the name which was represented by the hieroglyphic? That is precisely what our author forgets to tell us. But he easily goes on to remark that the meaning of the hieroglyphic came to be forgotten, and "the symbols gave rise to all the ridiculous tales about the heavenly signs." This explanation is attained by the process of reasoning in a vicious circle, from hypothetical premises ascertained to be false. All the known savages of the world, even those which have scarcely the elements of picture-writing, call the constellations by the names of men and animals, and all tell "ridiculous tales" to account for the names.

As the star-stories told by the Greeks, the ancient Egyptians, and other civilised people of the old world, exactly correspond in character, and sometimes even in incident, with the star-stories of modern savages, we have the choice of two hypotheses to explain this curious coincidence. Perhaps the star-stories, about nymphs changed into bears, and bears changed into stars, were invented by the civilised races of old, and gradually found their way amongst people like the Esquimaux, and the Australians, and Bushmen. Or it may be insisted that the ancestors of Australians, Esquimaux, and Bushmen were once civilised, like the Greeks and Egyptians, and invented star-stories, still remembered by their degenerate descendants. These are the two forms of the explanation which will be advanced by persons who believe that the star-stories were originally the fruit of the civilised imagination. The other theory would be, that the "ridiculous tales" about the stars were originally the work of the savage imagination, and that the Greeks and Egyptians, when they became civilised, retained the old myths that their

ancestors had invented when they were savages. In favour of this theory it may be said, briefly, that there is no proof that the fathers of Australians, Esquimaux, and Bushmen had ever been civilised, while there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the fathers of the Greeks had once been savages. And, if we incline to the theory that the star-myths are the creation of savage fancy, we at once learn why they are, in all parts of the world, so much alike. Just as the flint and bone weapons of rude races resemble each other much more than they resemble the metal weapons and the artillery of advanced peoples, so the mental products, the fairy-tales, and myths of rude races have everywhere a strong family resemblance. They are produced by men in similar mental conditions of ignorance, curiosity, and credulous fancy, and they are intended to supply the same needs, partly of amusing narrative, partly of crude explanation of familiar phenomena.

Now it is time to prove the truth of our assertion that the star-stories of savage and of civilised races closely resemble each other. Let us begin with that well-known group, the *Pleiades*. The peculiarity of the *Pleiades* is that the group consists of seven stars, of which one is so dim that it seems entirely to disappear, and many persons can only detect its presence through a telescope. The Greeks had a myth to account for the vanishing of the lost Pleiad. The tale is given in the *Katasterismoi* (stories of metamorphoses into stars) attributed to Eratosthenes. This work was probably written after our era; but the author derived his information from older treatises now lost. According to the Greek myth, then, the seven stars of the Pleiad were seven maidens, daughters of the Giant Atlas. Six of them had gods for lovers; Posidon admired two of them, Zeus three, and Ares one; but the seventh had only an earthly wooer, and when all of them were changed into stars, the maiden with the mortal lover hid her light for shame. Now let us compare the Australian story. According to Mr. Dawson (*Australian Aborigines*), a writer who knows the natives well, "their knowledge of the heavenly bodies greatly exceeds that of most white people," and "is taught by men selected for their intelligence and information. The knowledge is important to the aborigines on their night journeys;" so we may be sure that the natives are careful observers of the heavens, and are likely to be conservative of these astronomical myths. The "Lost Pleiad" has not escaped them, and this is how they account for her disappearance. The *Pirt Kopan noot* tribe have a tradition that the *Pleiades* were a queen and her six attendants. Long ago the *Crow* (our *Canopus*) fell in love with the queen, who refused to be his wife. The *Crow* found that the queen and her six maidens, like other Australian *gins*, were in the habit of hunting for white edible grubs in the bark of trees. The *Crow* at once changed himself into a grub (just as Jupiter and Indra used to change into swans, horses, ants, or what not) and hid in the bark of a tree. The six maidens sought to pick him out with their wooden hooks, but he broke the points of all the hooks. Then came the

queen, with her pretty bone hook; he let himself be drawn out, took the shape of a giant, and ran away with her. Ever since there have only been six stars, the six maidens, in the *Pleiad*. This story is well known, by the strictest inquiry, to be current among the blacks of the West District, and in South Australia.

Mr. Tylor, whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect, thinks that this may be a European myth, told by some settler to a black in the Greek form, and then spread about among the natives. He complains that the story of the loss of the *brightest* star does not fit the facts of the case.

We do not know, and how can the Australians know, that the lost star was once the brightest? It appears to me that the Australians, remarking the disappearances of a star, might very naturally suppose that the *Crow* had selected for his wife that one which had been the most brilliant of the cluster. Besides, the wide distribution of the tale among the natives, and the very great change in the nature of the incidents, seem to point to a native origin. Though the main conception—the loss of one out of seven maidens—is identical in Greek and in *Murri*, the manner of the disappearance is eminently Hellenic in the one case, eminently savage in the other. However this may be, nothing of course is proved by a single example. Let us next examine the stars *Castor* and *Pollux*. Both in Greece and in Australia these are said once to have been two young men. In the *Katasterismoi*, already spoken of, we read: "The *Twins*, or *Dioscouri*.—They were nurtured in Lacedæmon, and were famous for their brotherly love, wherefore Zeus, desiring to make their memory immortal, placed them both among the stars." In Australia, according to Mr. Brough Smyth (*Aborigines of Victoria*), *Turree* (*Castor*) and *Wanjel* (*Pollux*) are two young men who pursue *Purra* and kill him at the commencement of the great heat. *Coonar toorung* (the mirage) is the smoke of the fire by which they roast him. In Greece it was not *Castor* and *Pollux* but *Orion* who was the great hunter set among the stars. Among the Bushmen of South Africa *Castor* and *Pollux* are not young men, but young women, the wives of the Eland, the great native antelope. In Greek star-stories the *Great Bear* keeps watch, Homer says, on the hunter *Orion* for fear of a sudden attack. But how did the Bear get its name in Greece? According to Hesiod, the oldest Greek poet after Homer, the Bear was once a lady, daughter of *Lycaon*, King of *Arcadia*. She was a nymph of the train of chaste *Artemis*, but yielded to the love of Zeus and became the ancestress of all the *Arcadians* (that is, *Bear-folk*). In her bestial form she was just about to be slain by her own son when Zeus rescued her by raising her to the stars. Here we must notice first, that the *Arcadians*, like *Australians*, *Red Indians*, *Bushmen*, and many other wild races, and like the *Bedouins*, believed themselves to be descended from an animal. That the early *Egyptians* did the same is not improbable; for names of animals are found among

the ancestors in the very oldest genealogical papyrus,* as in the genealogies of the old English kings. Next the Arcadians transferred the ancestral bear to the heavens, and, in doing this, they resembled the Peruvians, of whom Acosta says: "They adored the star *Urchuchilly*, feigning it to be a *Ram*, and worshipped two others, and say that one of them is a *sheep*, and the other a *lamb* . . . others worshipped the star called the *Tiger*. *They were of opinion that there was not any beast or bird upon the earth, whose shape or image did not shine in the heavens.*"

But to return to our bears. The Australians have, properly speaking, no bears, though the animal called the native bear is looked up to by the aborigines with superstitious regard. But among the North American Indians, as the old missionaries Lafitau and Charlevoix observed, "the four stars in front of our constellation are a bear; those in the tail are hunters who pursue him; the small star apart is the pot in which they mean to cook him."

It may be held that the Red Men derived their bear from the European settlers. But, as we have seen, an exact knowledge of the stars has always been useful if not essential to savages; and we venture to doubt whether they would confuse their nomenclature and sacred traditions by borrowing terms from trappers and squatters. But, if this is improbable, it seems almost impossible that all savage races should have borrowed their whole conception of the heavenly bodies from the myths of Greece. It is thus that Egede, a missionary of the last century, describes the Esquimaux philosophy of the stars: "The notions that the Greenlanders have as to the origin of the heavenly lights—as sun, moon, and stars—are very nonsensical; in that they pretend they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors, who, on different accounts, were lighted up to heaven, and became such glorious celestial bodies." Again, he writes: "Their notions about the stars are that some of them have been men, and others different sorts of animals and fishes." But every reader of Ovid knows that this was the very mythical theory of the Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians, again, worshipped Osiris, Isis, and the rest as *ancestors*, and there are even modern scholars who hold Osiris to have been originally a real historical person. But the Egyptian priests who showed Plutarch the grave of Osiris, showed him, too, the stars into which Osiris, Isis, and Horus had been metamorphosed. Here, then, we have Greeks, Egyptians, and Esquimaux, all agreed about the origin of the heavenly lights, all of opinion that "they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors."

The Australian general theory is: "Of the good men and women, after the deluge, Pundjel (a kind of Zeus, or rather a sort of Prometheus of Australian mythology) made stars. Sorcerers (*Biraark*) can tell which stars were once good men and women." Here the sorcerers have the same knowledge as the Egyptian priests. Again, just as among the Arcadians

* Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, i. 32.

"the progenitors of the existing tribes, whether birds, or beasts, or men, were set in the sky, and made to shine as stars."*

We have already given some Australian examples in the stories of the *Pleiades*, and of *Castor* and *Pollux*. We may add the case of the *Eagle*. In Greece the *Eagle* was the bird of Zeus, who carried off Gany-mede to be the cup-bearer of Olympus. Among the Australians this same constellation is called *Totyarguil*; he was a man who, when bathing, was killed by a fabulous animal, a kind of kelpie; as Orion, in Greece, was killed by the *Scorpion*. Like Orion, he was placed among the stars. The Australians have a constellation named *Eagle*, but he is our *Sirius*, or *Dog-star*.

The Bushmen, almost the lowest tribe of South Africa, have the same star-lore and much the same myths as the Greeks, Australians, Egyptians, and Esquimaux. According to Dr. Bleek, "stars, and even the sun and moon, were once mortals on earth, or even animals or inorganic substances, which happened to get translated to the skies. The sun was once a man, whose arm-pit radiated a limited amount of light round his house. Some children threw him into the sky, and there he shines." The Homeric hymn to Helios, in the same way, as Mr. Max Müller observes, "looks on the sun as a half god, almost a hero, who had once lived on earth." The pointers of the Southern Cross were "two men who were lions," just as Callisto, in Arcadia, was a woman who was a bear. It is not at all rare in those queer philosophies, as in that of the Scandinavians, to find that the sun or moon has been a man or woman. In Australian fable the moon was a man, the sun a woman of indifferent character, who appears at dawn in a coat of red kangaroo skins, the present of an admirer. In an old Mexican text the moon was a man, across whose face a god threw a rabbit, thus making the marks in the moon. Among the Esquimaux the moon is a girl who always flees from the cruel brother, the sun, because he disfigured her face. Among the New Zealanders and North American Indians the sun is a great beast, whom the hunters trapped and thrashed with cudgels. His blood is used in some New Zealand incantations. The Red Indians, as Schoolcraft says, "hold many of the planets to be transformed adventurers." The Iowas "believed stars to be a sort of living creatures." One of them came down and talked to a hunter, and showed him where to find game. The Gallineros of Central California, according to Mr. Bancroft, believe that the sun and moon were made and lighted up by the Hawk and the Coyote, who one day flew into each other's faces in the dark, and were determined to prevent such accidents in future. But the very oddest example of the survival of the notion that the stars are men or women, is found in the *Pax* of Aristophanes. Trygeus in that comedy has just made an expedition to heaven. A slave meets him and asks him, "Is not the story true, then, that we become stars when we die?" The answer is

* Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*.

"Certainly;" and Trygæus points out the star into which Ios of Chios has just been metamorphosed. Aristophanes is making fun of some popular Greek superstition. But that very superstition meets us in New Zealand. "Heroes," says Mr. Taylor, "were thought to become stars of greater or less brightness, according to the number of their victims slain in fight."

It would be easy to multiply examples of this stage of thought, and to show that star-stories existed on the banks of the Amazon as well as on the borders of the lake of Anahuac. But we have probably brought forward enough for our purpose, and have expressly chosen instances from the most widely separated peoples. These instances, it will perhaps be admitted, suggest, if they do not prove, that the Greeks had received from tradition precisely the same sort of legends about the heavenly bodies as are current among Esquimaux and Bushmen, New Zealanders and Iowas. As much, indeed, might be inferred from our own astronomical nomenclature. We now give to newly discovered stars names derived from distinguished people, as *Georgium Sidus*, or *Herschel*; or, again, merely technical appellatives, as *Alpha*, *Beta*, and the rest. We should never think when "some new planet swims into our ken" of calling it *Kangaroo*, or *Rabbit*, or after the name of some hero of romance, as *Rob Roy*, or *Count Fosco*. But the names of stars which we inherit from Greek mythology—the *Bear*, the *Pleiads*, *Castor* and *Pollux*, and so forth—are such as no people in our mental condition would originally think of bestowing. When Callimachus and the courtly astronomers of Alexandria pretended that the golden locks of Berenice were raised to the heavens, that was a mere piece of flattery constructed on the inherited model of legends about the crown (*Corona*) of Ariadne. It seems evident enough that the older Greek names of stars are derived from a time when the ancestors of the Greeks were in the mental and imaginative condition of Iowas, Kanekas, Bushmen, Murri, and New Zealanders. All these, and all other savage peoples, believe in a kind of equality and intercommunion among all things animate and inanimate. Stones are supposed in the Pacific Islands to be male and female and to propagate their species. Animals are believed to have human or super-human intelligence, and speech if they choose to exercise the gift. Stars are just on the same footing, and their movements are explained by the same ready system of universal anthropomorphism. Stars, fishes, gods, heroes, men, trees, clouds, and animals, all play their equal part in the confused dramas of savage thought and savage mythology. Even in practical life the change of a sorcerer into an animal is accepted as a familiar phenomenon, and the power of soaring among the stars is one on which the Australian Biraark, or the Esquimaux Shaman, most plumes himself. It is not wonderful that things which are held possible in daily practice should be frequent features of mythology. Hence the ready invention and belief of star-legends, which in their turn fix the names of the heavenly bodies. Nothing more, except the extreme

tenacity of tradition and the inconvenience of changing a widely accepted name, is needed to account for the human and animal names of the stars. The Greeks received from the dateless past of savage intellect the myths, and the names of the constellations, and we have taken them, without inquiry, from the Greeks. Thus it happens that our celestial globes are just as queer menageries as any globes could be that were illustrated by Australians or American Indians, by Bushmen or Peruvian aborigines, or Esquimaux. It was savages, we may be tolerably certain, who first handed to science the names of the constellations, and provided Greece with the raw material of her astronomical myths—as Bacon prettily says, that we listen to the harsh ideas of earlier peoples as they come to us “blown softly through the flutes of the Grecians.” The first moment in astronomical science arrives when the savage, looking at a star, says, like the child in the nursery poem, “How I wonder what you are !” The next moment comes when the savage has made his first rough practical observations of the movements of the heavenly body. His next step is to explain these to himself. Now science cannot advance any but a fanciful explanation beyond the sphere of experience. The experience of the savage is limited to the narrow world of his tribe, and of the beasts, birds, and fishes of his district. His philosophy, therefore, accounts for all phenomena on the supposition that the laws of the animate nature he observes are working everywhere. But his observations, misguided by his crude magical superstitions, have led him to believe in a state of equality and kinship between men and animals, and even inorganic things. He often worships the very beasts he slays ; he addresses them as if they understood him ; he believes himself to be descended from the animals, and of their kindred. These confused ideas he applies to the stars, and recognises in them men like himself, or beasts like those with which he conceives himself to be in such close human relations. There is scarcely a bird or beast but the Red Indian or the Australian will explain its peculiarities by a myth, like a page from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. It was once a man or a woman, and has been changed to bird or beast by a god or a magician. Men, again, have originally been beasts, in his philosophy, and are descended from wolves, frogs or serpents, or monkeys. The heavenly bodies are traced to precisely the same sort of origin ; and hence, we conclude, come their strange animal names, and the strange myths about them which appear in all ancient poetry. These names, in turn, have curiously affected human beliefs. Astrology is based on the opinion that a man’s character and fate are determined by the stars under which he is born. And the nature of these stars is deduced from their names, so that the bear should have been found in the horoscope of Dr. Johnson. When Giordano Bruno wrote his satire against religion, the famous *Spaccio della bestia trionfante*, he proposed to banish not only the gods but the beasts from heaven. He would call the stars not the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Pleiads*, but Truth, Mercy, Justice, and so forth, that men might

be born, not under bestial, but moral influences. But the beasts have had too long possession of the stars to be easily dislodged, and the tenure of the *Bear* and the *Swan* will probably last as long as there is a science of Astronomy. Their names are not likely again to delude a philosopher into the opinion of Aristotle that the stars are animated.

This argument had been worked out to the writer's satisfaction when he chanced to light on Mr. Max Müller's explanation of the name of the *Great Bear*. We have explained that name as only one out of countless similar appellations which men of every race give to the stars. These names, again, we have accounted for as the result of savage philosophy, which takes no great distinction between man and the things in the world, and looks on stars, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers, and trees as men and women in disguise. M. Müller's theory is based on philological considerations. He thinks that the name of the *Great Bear* is the result of a mistake as to the meaning of words. There was in Sanskrit, he says (*Lectures on Language*, pp. 359, 362), a root *ark*, or *arch*, meaning to be bright. The stars are called *riksha*, that is, bright ones, in the Veda. "The constellations here called the *Rikshas*, in the sense of 'the bright ones,' would be homonymous in Sanskrit with the Bears. Remember also that, apparently without rhyme or reason, the same constellation is called by Greeks and Romans the Bear. . . . There is not the shadow of a likeness with a bear. You will now perceive the influence of words on thought, or the spontaneous growth of mythology. The name *Riksha* was applied to the bear in the sense of the bright fuscous animal, and in that sense it became most popular in the later Sanskrit, and in Greek and Latin. The same name, 'in the sense of the bright ones,' had been applied by the Vedic poets to the stars in general, and more particularly to that constellation which in the northern parts of India was the most prominent. The etymological meaning, 'the bright stars,' was forgotten; the popular meaning of *Riksha* (bear) was known to every one. And thus it happened that, when the Greeks had left their central home and settled in Europe, they retained the name of *Arktos* for the same unchanging stars; but, not knowing why those stars had originally received that name, they ceased to speak of them as *arktoi*, or many bears, and spoke of them as the Bears."

This is a very good example of the philological way of explaining a myth. If once we admit that *ark*, or *arch*, in the sense of "bright" and of "bear," existed, not only in Sanskrit, but in the undivided Aryan tongue, and that the name *Riksha*, bear, "became in that sense most popular in Greek and Latin," this theory seems more than plausible. There is a difficulty, however, in finding *Riksha* either in Latin or Greek. But the explanation does not look so well if we examine, not only the Aryan, but all the known myths and names of the Bear and the other stars. Professor Sayce, a distinguished philologist, says we may not compare non-Aryan with Aryan myths. We have ventured to do so, however, in this paper, and have shown that the most widely

severed races give the stars animal names, of which the *Bear* is one example. Now, if the philologists wish to persuade us that it was decaying and half-forgotten language which caused men to give the names of animals to the stars, they must prove their case on an immense collection of instances—on Iowa, Kanekn, Murri, Maori, Brazilian, Peruvian, Mexican, Egyptian, Esquimaux instances. Does the philological explanation account for the enormous majority of these phenomena? If it fails, we may at least doubt whether it solves the one isolated case of the Great Bear among the Greeks and Romans. It must be observed that the philological explanation of M. Müller does not clear up the Arcadian story of their own descent from a she-bear who is now a star. Yet similar stories of the descent of tribes from animals are so widespread, that it would be difficult to name the race, or the quarter of the globe, where they are not found. And these considerations appear to be a strong argument for comparing not only Aryan, but all attainable myths. We shall often find, if we take a wide view, that the philological explanation which seemed plausible in a single case, is hopelessly narrow when applied to a large collection of parallel cases in languages of various families.

A. L.

The Man with the Red Hair.

I.

ABOUT a score of us—men, women, and children—were eating our breakfast at Toogood's place down in Suffolk, one September morning, when Toogood, who had been reading his letters, looked up, rubbing his bald head and frowning, as he does in moments of distress, and called out across the table to his wife, "I say, mother, Percival's coming to-morrow."

"Percival? Percival?" repeated Mrs. Toogood vaguely. "Oh, do you mean the man with the red hair? I am so sorry!"

The Toogoods are such extremely hospitable people that it is hardly possible to conceive such a thing as that either of them should feel sorry at the prospect of receiving an additional guest in their capacious house, and Florry Neville only made herself the spokeswoman of the entire company by asking in a tone of astonishment, "Why? Because he has red hair?"

"Well, yes; partly because of that," answered Mrs. Toogood with a sigh.

"Now mind, children," said Toogood in a loud voice; "not a word about red hair so long as Mr. Percival is here."

I don't know how many children Toogood has—I have never attempted to count them—but I do know that, if there was anything which I particularly wished to prevent them from alluding to, the very last course that I should adopt would be to tell them of it.

"The first child," continued Toogood resolutely, "who mentions the subject of red hair during Mr. Percival's visit will be whopped, or confined to the nursery, or made to learn the first six propositions of Euclid by heart according to age and sex. So now you know."

"And how about adults?" Miss Neville inquired. "What is to be done to them if they hurt your carrotty friend's feelings?"

"Oh, *he'll* look after the adults," answered Toogood rather gloomily; "I believe he half killed a man at Oxford, years ago, for calling him Carrots. I don't know what he'd do in the case of a lady, I'm sure; but I wouldn't try chaffing him, Miss Neville, if I were you—I wouldn't really."

Now that, again, is not the sort of thing that I should have said with a view to making sure of Florry's behaving herself; but dear old Toogood is always saying things that he ought not to say.

"Percival isn't a bad fellow," he continued pensively, "so long as

you don't rub him the wrong way ; only, unfortunately, it takes very little to rub him the wrong way ; and when he gets into one of his tempers—well, it's uncommonly disagreeable for everybody."

After that I suppose we all felt an increased curiosity to behold the man with the red hair ; and I can answer for one of us who was not without hope that he might be attacked by some extraordinary fit of fury before he went away. I must confess that I take a great delight in seeing things broken (of course I don't mean my own things) ; and sincerely as I should have deplored the annihilation of Mrs. Toogood's best dessert-service, still, if such a calamity was bound to take place, I should certainly have wished to be there to look on at it. I imagined the redoubtable Percival as a brawny giant with a flaming mane and beard, and after breakfast I found in one of the children's picture-books a representation of an ogre which seemed so exactly like what he ought to be that I pointed it out to Florry Neville, who was so kind as to say that she would take an early opportunity of showing it to him and telling him that I had supposed it to be his portrait.

However, when he did come, he turned out, like so many things that one has looked forward to, to be a disappointment—at all events so far as appearances went. He was not in the least like the ogre in the picture-book, nor like any ogre at all, but was a tall and well-made fellow of six or seven and twenty, whom nine people out of ten would have pronounced decidedly good-looking. Certainly his hair was red ; but it was cut so short that its colour hardly attracted attention, and he wore neither beard nor moustache. It was just before dinner that we had our first view of him, and I scrutinised him then and throughout the evening rather narrowly without discovering anything about him different from the rest of the world, except that his eyes were a little restless, and that he spoke with a certain hurried excitability when he was interested in his subject. If he had been a horse, you would have said that he was a high-couraged animal, nothing more. At dessert the children stared at him with round eyes, and I could see that my feeling of disappointment was shared by them ; but they made no dreadful remarks, nor was the harmony of the evening in any way disturbed. As for his manners, nothing could have been more pleasant. His voice was rather loud, but not disagreeable ; he talked a good deal—chiefly about sport—and was very cheery and unaffected and ready to make friends with everybody.

After dinner Florry Neville took him away into a corner and began to flirt with him outrageously ; but that I had known beforehand that she would do. I may mention that Florry is my cousin, and that I have been acquainted with her little ways for many years. Rufus appeared to be much taken with her. I don't know whether she chaffed him or not ; but, if she did, her chaff must have been of a very mild order, for

no one could have looked more complacent than he did when the ladies went upstairs and we adjourned to the smoking-room.

The next day he came out shooting with us, and shot uncommonly well; and in the evening we played pool, and although he was fluked twice and sold once, he did not break the lamps. After he had been three days in the house he had made himself quite a popular person, having spoken no uncivil word to anybody, nor offended against a single law of good breeding, unless it were in his attentions to Florry, which were perhaps just a shade too conspicuous, and which seemed to cause Mrs. Toogood some anxiety. But on the fourth day something happened which was quite certain to happen sooner or later. Florry grew tired of her red-haired admirer and took up with a more recent arrival. As soon as dinner was over, I saw Percival make for the sofa upon which she was sitting with his supplanter; I saw her look up at him over her fan with that air of innocent surprise and inquiry which she knows so well how to assume when it suits her purpose; and then, after saying a few words to her, he suddenly whisked round upon his heels and came striding towards the fireplace with a scowl upon his face which boded no good to the Dresden shepherdesses on the mantelpiece. Evidently the desire to break something was strong upon him; but he spared the china. All he did was to snatch up the poker and begin hammering at the coals with a violence which sent some red-hot cinders flying out on to the hearth-rug. This was certainly a breach of good manners; and when I mildly asked him whether anything was the matter, he inquired savagely what the devil I meant by that—which was worse. However, he begged my pardon presently, and I said it was of no consequence.

On the following morning we went out after the partridges again, and I don't think I ever in all my days saw a man shoot so wildly as Percival did. He had started in a bad temper, and the worse he shot the more angry he became. Everybody who spoke to him got sworn at for his pains, and he ended by pulling up in the middle of a turnip-field, pitching his gun half-a-dozen yards away, and marching off, with his hands in his pockets, growling and muttering to himself.

"Dear me!" said Toogood, rubbing his head, as he gazed after his retreating guest, "how ridiculous it is, to be sure! Fancy a man of his age behaving like a spoilt child in that way!"

"Ah," said Moreton, "I told you how it would be. Now you'll see. He'll go back to the house and kill the first person he meets."

"I suppose I ought to go after him," sighed Toogood ruefully.

But I said I would go; and my offer was accepted with alacrity.

"Do, like a good fellow, Oliver," answered Toogood; "I believe you can quiet him down better than anybody."

The truth is that our irascible friend had taken rather a fancy to me. Far be it from me to suggest that my own personal attractions were not

amply sufficient to account for this; still, I have observed that, when I happen to be staying in the same house with Florry Neville, men often do take a fancy to me. I don't know why they should imagine that because she is my cousin it is worth their while to worm themselves into my good graces; but the fact remains that they do.

I overtook Percival in the adjoining field, where he had stopped short and waited for me, after having been shouted at three or four times.

"Well," he said, looking anything but amiable, "what's the row? What do you want?"

"I have brought you your gun," said I; "you may want it again perhaps. I'm not quite up to the mark myself to-day, so I thought I might as well walk home with you."

This soft answer seemed to have the effect of turning away his wrath. He laughed and clapped me rather heavily upon the shoulder, saying, "Upon my word, Oliver, you're an awfully good little chap!"

That is what one gets by being good-natured. I may be quite as sensitive about my diminutive stature as some other people are about their red hair; but because I don't fly into tantrums a man thinks nothing of calling me "a good little chap;" whereas if I had said, for instance, "You aren't a bad sort of a red-headed duffer, Percival, after all," I suppose he would simply have torn me to pieces.

"The fact of the matter is," he went on confidentially, "that I have a devil of a temper."

He looked as if he expected me to express some surprise; so I said, "Have you really?"

"Yes. I can control it pretty well generally; but every now and then it gets the upper hand of me. And it is irritating to go out for a morning's shooting and not to be able to touch a feather, isn't it?"

I said there was no doubt of that.

"Besides which, I have had other things to annoy me—annoy me most confoundedly," he went on, frowning and clenching his fists in a manner which I afterwards found was habitual to him. "What do you think of Miss Neville?" he asked abruptly.

"What do I think of her? Perhaps you don't know she is my cousin," I answered.

"Oh, yes, I do: that's why I ask. You ought to know something about her. Is she a humbug? Is she the sort of girl to lead a man on and then throw him over? That's what I mean."

And then, to my amazement, he proceeded to state that he had made up his mind to marry Miss Neville; that she had given him to understand that his attentions were not disagreeable to her; and that he wanted to know whether she was the girl he had taken her for, or nothing but a flirt. "Because," he concluded, "I do hate a flirt."

I always try to say pleasant things both of and to people, when I

can. I gave Florry a rather better character than she deserved, at the same time pointing out to my companion that he was really jumping to conclusions in a rather too impetuous way.

"Oh," said he, "I'm not impetuous. I don't for a moment suppose that she would take me to-morrow, if I asked her; and I don't mean to ask her then, nor for a long time to come. I tell *you*, because you are a friend of mine" (he had known me just four days), "and because I don't see the use of keeping secrets from one's friends; but of course it's quite another thing with her. I only asked you to tell me the truth about her so that I might have the chance of pulling myself up before it was too late."

I began to wish with all my heart that Red-head had kept his confidences to himself. The plain, unvarnished truth was that Florry was about the most irreclaimable flirt of my acquaintance; but it seemed a pity to say this: for she was not well off, and I had found out that Percival was a man of considerable property.

On the other hand, if I allowed him to infer that she was all his fancy had painted her, he would probably ere long have an unpleasant shock; in which case the chances were that he would murder us both. I therefore took up a high tone. I said that in matters of this kind a man must use his own powers of observation and choose for himself; I really could not accept the responsibility which he sought to impose upon me. Furthermore, I didn't think it was quite the thing to give private information about a lady's disposition, as though she were a hunter put up for sale.

He made me rather ashamed of myself by grasping my hand warmly and saying that I was a good fellow. Did I think, now, that Mrs. and Miss Neville could be persuaded to pay him a visit at his place in November? And would I come too? Without vanity, he might say that he could promise me as good pheasant-shooting as there was to be had in the county. I said yes to that without much hesitation; for I reflected that, if Florry accepted him, there would probably be no flare-up until after the marriage, and that if she didn't, he couldn't blame me. And so we walked back to the house upon the best of terms with one another.

I suppose Percival had no great difficulty in making his peace with Florry. Her second string was still out shooting, and to quarrel with the only available man at hand would have seemed to her a wanton waste of opportunity. She allowed him to monopolise her for the rest of the afternoon and evening, and he was proportionately cheerful and gracious to those about him. But on the following day she thought, no doubt, that it would be only fair to give the other man a turn. At all events, she went out riding with the other man; and nothing more than that was required to convert Percival once more into the semblance of a wild beast. All day long he did his best to pick a quarrel with one of us, but was baffled by our obstinate politeness; and I dare say we should

have managed to get to bed without a row if poor old Toogood had not made a most unlucky slip of the tongue after dinner.

"I can't see anything to admire in her," said he, referring to a lady whose claims to beauty happened to be under discussion. "I never could admire a woman with r——"

He came to a dead stop, and turned a great deal redder than the locks which he couldn't admire. It is true that he recovered himself rather cleverly by saying "round shoulders" in a loud voice; but this emendation came a great deal too late to be of any use to him. Already the children had exploded, one after the other, and were rolling about on their respective chairs in agonies of merriment; the rest of us were preternaturally unconscious; Mrs. Toogood was fanning herself nervously; and Percival, with a white face and blazing eyes, was crushing biscuits to powder between his fingers. The awkward moment passed, however, as all moments, awkward and otherwise, do, and there was no reason why it should have been ever alluded to again. But poor, dear Toogood is one of those infatuated people who never make a false step without subsequent uncalled-for flounderings. No sooner had the ladies left the room than he actually began to apologise for his stupidity. "My dear fellow, I'm sure I beg your pardon most sincerely. Can't think how I can have been such an ass as to let it slip out. The fact is, that at the moment, I had quite forgotten that you were here."

I don't suppose that our amiable host was ever before in such imminent danger of having one of his own decanters hurled at his head. Percival was literally quivering from head to foot with passion, and it was evident that he went through a hard struggle before he would trust himself to answer. When he did speak, it was to say in a low voice, "If you think you are going to get a rise out of me, Mr. Toogood, you'll be disappointed. But I don't see that I am bound to put up with insults of this sort in any man's house, and I shall leave yours to-morrow morning."

Toogood is the most patient of men; but his patience was probably exhausted by this time. He didn't say "You may go to the devil," as I really think I should have done in his place; but he made no more apologies, nor did he beg his guest to remain on. He sat silent and rubbed his head.

Later in the evening Percival came into the smoking-room and offered a sort of apology; upon which, as a matter of course, he was urged to reconsider his decision about going away. But this he declined to do, alleging that he had other reasons for wishing to leave without loss of time; and, to tell the truth, he was not very much pressed to stay.

II.

Shortly afterwards I wrote to Percival, saying that I was sorry to say that I should not be able to avail myself of his hospitality. To this

he returned no answer, and I soon forgot all about him. My next meeting with him did not take place until some six months later, when he turned up unexpectedly at Cannes, whither I had betaken myself, after wintering in Egypt, in order to see the Nevilles, who were living in an hotel there.

I was half dozing in an arm-chair by the open window, one morning, when I was startled by a tremendous shindy going on in the court-yard of the hotel below me. I went downstairs at once; for I rather like a row (when I am not called upon to take part in it), and the first thing that I saw was my red-headed friend engaged in an angry altercation with the landlord, while a group of grinning waiters and porters stood around, keeping well beyond the reach of his umbrella, with which he was describing energetic circles in the air.

"You chattering idiot!" he was bawling out, "*si vous n'avez pas shomber, pourquoi diabel télégraphier to say that you had?*"

"Monsieur, je vous assure"—began the landlord deprecatingly.

"Je vous assure that I'm not going to stand here all day. Avez-vous shomber ou n'avez-vous pas? Oui ou non? Répondez!"

Here the hall porter interposed. "Very goot rooms on the second floor, sare; au premier it was impossibilité d'en avoir."

"Then pourquoi diabel didn't you say so before? Here, carry up the luggage, you beggars! Porty baggage—vite! Look sharp!"

The noisy little procession came clattering upstairs—first the landlord, relieving his feelings by calling Percival opprobrious names in an undertone; then the waiters; then the porters with the luggage; finally Percival himself, growling like a distant thunderstorm. On the first landing he became aware of me, and looked a good deal more surprised than pleased at seeing me.

"Hullo!" he said, "I didn't know *you* were here."

From the emphasis which he laid upon the pronoun I was led to conclude that he had known that the Nevilles were at Cannes; and this, it subsequently appeared, was the case. I had not long resumed my interrupted siesta when there came a thundering rap at the door, and immediately my friend stalked in "to tell me," as he said, "all about it." He dragged a chair up to the window, seated himself astride upon it, and began a rapid explanation, sometimes frowning and sometimes smiling at me over his folded arms while he talked. It seemed that he was as much bent as ever upon espousing Florry Neville. He had tried to forget her, but without success; "and when I saw that fellow's marriage in the paper the other day," he concluded, "I made up my mind to lose no more time, and started for Cannes at once."

"What fellow?" I asked, in some bewilderment.

"As if you didn't know!" he returned pettishly. "Why, that man whom she threw me over for down in Suffolk, of course. I knew there was no chance for me so long as he was in the way."

At the risk of being pitched neck and crop out of window, I could

not restrain a roar of laughter. "My dear fellow," I said, "it's ten to one that Miss Neville doesn't even remember the name of that individual. You must either be unwarrantably particular or very easily discouraged."

"I'm not easily discouraged," he answered. "As to my being particular, that's quite possible. I wouldn't give a fig for a man who was not particular where his wife was concerned."

"His wife! This is taking time by the forelock with a vengeance," I remarked.

"Oh, well," he said impatiently, "it's the same thing." And then—by way, no doubt, of showing me how particular he was—he requested to be informed what had brought me to Cannes. He was kind enough to say that he quite admitted my right to be his rival; only he was anxious that there should be no misunderstanding about it. He begged, therefore, that I would treat him as a friend and speak openly.

I hastened to assure him that he had nothing to fear from me; that I hoped to remain a bachelor for many years to come; and that, if ever I did marry, my cousin would assuredly not be the favoured lady who would be asked to share my joys and sorrows. But I believe he was only half convinced, and indeed, from then to the end of our acquaintance, he never ceased to regard me with a greater or less degree of suspicion. Percival was the sort of man who would have been jealous of his own grandfather rather than not have been jealous at all.

He found plenty of people to be jealous of at Cannes, where Florry's attractions were widely known and appreciated, and I felt quite sorry for the poor fellow when I saw how cruelly she treated him. For the first few days he had it all his own way. Florry seemed to be, and I dare say was, delighted to see him. She rode to a picnic with him, she allowed him to take her out for a sail on the bay, she sat with him in the garden in the evenings, and in short lifted him up into a seventh heaven of bliss. Then, of course, she abruptly kicked him out of it. There was a man named Lacy who was at that time among the most devoted of her slaves; and when Percival had had his little innings it was Lacy's turn to score. To do Florry justice, I must say that there is no sort of deception about her proceedings. She is very pretty, she is capital fun, and she is an adept at what I should call the hard-hearted style of flirtation; but, as her sole aim and object is to amuse herself, she does not make much pretence of caring about one man more than another, nor does she attempt to disguise her liking for variety. Her admirers, if they are sensible men, understand this, and regulate their conduct accordingly. Lacy, who was a quiet, easy-going fellow, understood it, I suppose, well enough; but poor Percival didn't understand it at all, and the agonies that he suffered when he was left out in the cold were pitiable to witness. He was at Cannes altogether about a fortnight, I think, and I am sure I don't exaggerate when I say that he must have lost a stone's weight in that time. His face grew quite haggard and lined, his eyes had an unnatural brightness as if he did not sleep well at

night, and—most portentous of all—his vile temper seemed to have been completely cast out of him. At dinner, one evening, a waiter upset a plate of soup over his shoulder, and he got up meekly and went off to change his coat without saying a word.

In common humanity I felt bound, at last, to direct Florry's attention to these symptoms, and to warn her that Percival was not as other men are.

"Poor dear old Carrots!" she said; "and so you really think he has grown thinner? How nice of him! It will be a long time before you will allow any woman to reduce *your* weight, Charley."

I said I humbly hoped it might be a very long time indeed.

"There is a great deal that is delightful and original about Carrots," she went on pensively. "Sometimes I am almost inclined to give him what he wants, and become Mrs. Carrots."

"And won't he lead you a life if you do!" thought I to myself; but I only said, "You'll have to make haste about it then; for if he goes on wasting at his present rate of progress, there'll be nothing left of him at the end of another month."

Perhaps Florry was alarmed at this prospect; for she now took Percival into favour again, and began snubbing Lacy, who didn't seem to care much. Lacy appeared to me to hold wise and philosophical views of life, and to accept the pleasures of dalliance for what they were worth. When Florry smiled upon him, he basked in her smiles with perfect contentment; when she frowned, he wrapped himself in his own virtue and took a hand at whist, while his lady-love and his rival wandered about the garden, enjoying the scent of the orange-blossoms and the balmy breezes of the Mediterranean, and the moonlight, and all the rest of it. Other things being equal, I know which of the two men I should have chosen for a husband, if I had been a young woman, and the choice had been offered me; and in this case other things were about equal; for Mrs. Neville informed me that Lacy was very well off, and had excellent prospects. She also confided to me that she was dreadfully frightened of Percival, and wished to goodness he would go away. "A red Othello!" she said; "I couldn't bear to think of my daughter's passing her life with him."

I don't know whether Florry was beginning to think seriously of passing her life with him; but it soon became evident that she did not intend to pass the whole of her time with him at present. After a day or two Lacy was whistled back; and others besides Lacy had their share of encouragement. Then, just as Percival was upon the point of despairing utterly, he, in his turn, was recalled; and so the game of see-saw went on. See-saw is as good a form of amusement as another, so long as you remember where you are, and have your feet ready to touch the ground when your end of the plank goes down. You then descend gently and rise again in a graceful and dignified manner; and this was what Lacy did. But if you imagine that your seat is a steady one, you are

apt to bump Mother Earth suddenly and heavily, and to be carried aloft again with ridiculous plunges and total loss of balance; and this was what happened to Percival. He took it all, as I have said, with wonderful submissiveness. I suspect that Florry must have given him a hint that, despite appearances, he was really the favoured suitor: at least, I cannot account in any other way for the fact that he never once proposed to punch Lacy's head.

But a rude awakening was in store for him. There was a good deal of gaiety of a mild order going on at Cannes, and the Nevilles were constantly dragging me off to balls given by one or the other of the English people who had villas in the place. I am not very passionately fond of dancing myself; so I generally contrived to slip out and smoke a quiet cigar in the garden while the others were scuffling about and making themselves hot indoors; and I was enjoying myself in this way, one evening, when Percival came out of the house and flung himself down upon the bench beside me.

I had had the privilege of seeing him dance once—his performance much resembled that of the proverbial bear upon a hot plate—and I at once conjectured that Florry had sent him about his business, and that he had sought me out with a view to pouring forth the pent-up bitterness of an overcharged spirit. But that, it seemed, had not been his intention. He was rather dejected, but not at all wrathful, and, although he talked about nothing but Florry, he did not mention her by name. He spoke, in a subdued and somewhat pathetic tone, of women generally, and laid down the proposition that their conduct was not to be judged by the standards which are supposed to govern the actions of men. A woman's love of admiration, for instance, was something outside our experience. We were too coarse and too matter-of-fact to enter into it; and he was persuaded that we often in our haste condemned girls as flirts who didn't at all deserve that name, but were merely indulging in a very natural and innocent pastime.

"You see, Oliver, a woman has precious few amusements, when you come to think of it, and I don't see why we should grudge her those that she can get. I shall never go in for being one of those selfish brutes of husbands who won't let their wives go into society, and who look black at them if they speak to another man. What I say is that, so long as I know that she loves me, I want nothing more; and what do I care if Tom, Dick, and Harry are fools enough to think they have made a conquest of her because she finds them useful as partners at a ball? That's the way I look at it; I don't know whether you agree with me."

I said I did most thoroughly, and that my wife, if ever I had one, should be allowed any amount of rope. It was no hard matter to guess where the poor fellow had got these precious maxims from, and it was also easy enough to see that they were very far from representing his personal views.

"It's an insult to your wife," he continued, "to treat her as though

you couldn't trust her out of your sight. Now my motto is, 'Trust me all in all, or——'

The words died away upon his lips; for while he had been speaking a couple had stepped through one of the open French windows on to the gravel—which couple, coming forward in the bright moonlight, became clearly visible to us as Miss Neville and Lacy; and this was an *argument ad rem* for which my philosopher had perhaps hardly bargained.

I regret to say that Florry had clasped her hands round her partner's arm and was looking up into his face in a very reprehensible manner, while he bent over her till their noses almost touched. I made so bold as to give a loud "Ha-hum!" but the bench upon which we were sitting was in the shade and the music was in full blast indoors; so Florry didn't hear any danger-signal, I presume. She and Lacy advanced serenely; and, when they were nearly within speaking distance of us, what did that little wretch do but take a rose out of the front of her dress and hand it to her companion, who kissed it fervently before popping it into the pocket nearest to his heart. I shook in my shoes; for Heaven only knew what she might not do next; but Percival waited to see no more. He bounded off the bench like an india-rubber ball, and away he went into the darkness as if the devil was after him. I hesitated for a few minutes and then decided to follow him; but he went at such a pace that I only caught him up on the doorstep of the hotel. He was as white as chalk, and I could see that he was in a towering rage.

"Come now, Percival," I said soothingly, taking him by the arm, "don't make mountains out of molehills. Remember what you said yourself just now about the innocent pastimes of women."

He turned round and glared at me. "Shut up!" he roared, giving me a shove that sent me spinning to the other side of the hall; and presently I heard him mounting the staircase three steps at a time.

Rude; but perhaps not unpardonable. I forgave him, and went to bed, consoling myself with the reflection that, if murder or suicide came of this, I had at least done my little best to avert bloodshed.

III.

About six o'clock the next morning I was roughly awakened by Percival's coming into my room and pulling the pillow from under my head.

"What is the matter now?" I asked, sitting up and rubbing my eyes; and I dare say I added some strong expressions; for there is nothing in the wide world that I hate so much as being roused from my slumbers in the middle of the night.

Percival sat down on the bed. "Look here, Oliver," he said; "I must get out of this. After what you saw last night, I needn't tell you why. I'm not the first man who has been made a fool of by a woman; and I'm not going to break my heart about it—no fear!" Here he

pumped up a hollow laugh. "But it won't do for me to stop in this place," he went on. "I should be breaking somebody's neck if I did; and I'm off to the Pyrenees this morning to shoot bears and bouquetins. After a week or two of that I shall be able to pull myself together, I expect."

"Quite right," I said sleepily. "Best thing you can do."

"I don't want to go alone, though. Now, Oliver, will you do a fellow a good turn, and come with me? I left the tent and everything else that we shall want out there last year, and I've telegraphed to the natives to say I'm coming. It would do you all the good in the world to camp out in the mountains for a bit. Of course I pay all expenses, and I'll guarantee you some sport."

I hardly knew what answer to make. Life at Cannes was monotonous, to say the least of it; I had never seen a bear in my life, except at the Zoo, and I had never seen a bouquetin at all. On the other hand, life in the wilds with so uncertain-tempered a companion as Percival might not prove to be an unmixed delight. He watched me eagerly while I was balancing these considerations one against the other, and forestalled my reply by exclaiming, "For Heaven's sake, Oliver, don't say you are going to refuse! I don't mind telling the truth to you: I'm hard hit—I'm devilish hard hit."

His voice shook a little, and upon my word I believe there were tears in his eyes.

"I *daren't* go alone," he went on. "So long as I'm shooting, I'm all right, and I don't care a snap for any woman in the world; but I couldn't face the long evenings all by myself. Hang it, man! can't you understand? It's a case of something very like life or death, I can tell you."

I think I mentioned before that I am extremely good-natured. This piteous appeal of Percival's turned the scale, and I said I would see him through.

Florry's face, when we made our adieux to her and her mother before starting for the station, was a very amusing study, and if Percival noticed it, he must have felt himself fully entitled to score one. But I am not sure that he looked at her at all. He said in an off-hand way, "Good-bye, Miss Neville. Meet you again some day I hope," and plunged into the omnibus, head first, without waiting for her to make any reply.

I don't think Florry half liked it. Whether she had intended to marry Percival or not, I am very sure that she had never contemplated his bolting after so unceremonious a fashion; but of course it was too late to think of stopping him then. She took quite an affectionate farewell of me, begging me to be sure and let her know what sport we had, and asking what my address was to be.

"Poste Restante, Bagnères de Luchon," growled out Percival from the recesses of the omnibus. "We shan't be much in the way of getting letters for the next fortnight, though. Come along, Oliver; there's no time to lose."

Now will it be believed that, after all that had come and gone, that red-headed idiot sulked for a matter of four-and-twenty hours because my cousin had expressed her intention of writing to me? I couldn't make out what was wrong with him at first; but by degrees it transpired, and I had all the trouble in the world to persuade him that, putting my own blameless innocence out of the question, it was utterly illogical of him to be at the same jealous of Lacy and of me. Indeed, it was only by threatening to abandon him to his fate at Toulouse that I managed to bring him to his bearings. After that he became more reasonable, and both his spirits and his manners improved as soon as we had left civilisation behind us.

We spent ten days very pleasantly and successfully, upon the whole, in the wild Spanish valley where Percival had chosen to pitch our tent. No bears came our way, but we killed a lot of isards, and I was lucky enough to bring down the only bouquetin that I got a shot at. Percival shot two; which was just as well, for it would have been quite enough to upset his equanimity that the larger number should have fallen to my share. With his removal from the chastening influence of Florry's society, his queer, gusty temper had reasserted itself to some extent, and we had more than one absurd little scene with the guides and porters who accompanied us; but, taking him altogether, he was not a disagreeable companion. In point of fact we had so few opportunities for conversation that there was not much fear of our falling out. Our days were naturally given up entirely to sport; and when we returned to our encampment in the evening, dead beat and as hungry as hawks, neither of us wished for anything more than to partake of the savoury stew which the guides prepared for us, and to lie down afterwards with our feet to the blaze of the bonfire, listening to their long yarns or to the melancholy dirge-like songs that they sang, until we were overtaken by sleep. I don't think Florry's name was once mentioned, but Percival alluded to her indirectly every now and again, and from some hints which he let fall I gathered that he had not yet given up all hope. Very likely he had meant to renounce her for ever when he left Cannes; but upon more deliberate reflection he may have found that it was in his heart to forgive her, and may also have argued, from what he knew of her character, that she would be sure to want him back as soon as he was well out of reach.

We had more than a week of magnificent warm days and clear frosty nights; but then the weather suddenly changed, and the rain began to come down as it only knows how to come down in the mountains. Neither Percival nor I wanted to give the thing up without having fired a single shot at a bear; but we could not manage to keep the water out of our tent, and there was no other shelter within reach, except a wretched little hut about four feet high, used in summer by the Spanish shepherds, so we agreed to take advantage of this opportunity to cross over into France and get newspapers and letters.

We had a long, toilsome trudge across the snow, and did not reach Luchon until it was too late to think of anything but bed; but the next day we went to the post-office, where a large bundle of letters was delivered to each of us. Percival glanced hastily at his, and then flung them down with a muttered oath. Obviously he was disappointed for some reason or other; but it did not occur to me until afterwards that he might have cherished a wild hope of finding a communication from Florry among them. I was more favoured. My budget contained two letters bearing the Cannes post-mark, and the first of these I read aloud to Percival as we walked away—not on account of its intrinsic interest, which was small, but because I thought it as well to lose no occasion of convincing him that my relations with Florry were of a most correct and cousinly kind. But when I proceeded to open the second I was obliged to be seized with a terrific fit of coughing, for the very first words that caught my eye were, "You may congratulate me, if you like, on my engagement to Mr. Lacy." Here was a nice piece of business! I stuffed the fatal missive into my pocket, and slipped away as soon as I could to finish it in private. There was no mistake about it. The horrid little woman had really gone and engaged herself to Lacy, and, with her usual want of consideration, had left me the agreeable task of announcing the news to Percival. "Love to Carrots," she added in a postscript. "I hope he is enjoying himself, and that he won't receive too warm a hug from one of his kindred bears."

I haven't the least doubt that when she wrote those words there was a malicious grin on her face, and that she flattered herself she had paid Carrots off that time. But if she imagined that I should carry this epistolary slap in the face to its destination, she was sadly mistaken in me. "No, indeed," I thought; "I am not going to expose myself to the risk of being eaten up alive to please anybody;" and I determined that Percival's sport should not be spoilt by any unwelcome communication from me.

The unlucky part of it was that I had aroused his suspicions by letting him hear the contents of the first letter, and stopping so suddenly upon the point of reading him the second; and all that day and the next, when we set out to return to our encampment, he went on bothering me about it. What had Miss Neville said in that other letter of hers? Why was I so confoundedly mysterious? Had she mentioned him?—and so forth. I could only return feeble and evasive replies, which of course did not satisfy him. He tried wheedling me and he tried bullying me, but he might just as well have talked to a stone wall. The secret, I resolved, should only be dragged from me with my life; and at last he gave it up and subsided into a state of silent and subdued ferocity which made me exceedingly uncomfortable.

But when we reached our camp there was good news for us; and Percival came out of the sulks on hearing that the tracks of a whole bear family—father, mother, and two cubs—had been seen on the freshly-

fallen snow not a couple of miles away. The guides had already arranged our plan of action for the morrow, and pretended, as those fellows always do, to be so intimately acquainted with the habits of bears in general as to know to a nicety what their programme would be too. Paterfamilias, we were informed, would start with break of day for the higher pastures above the village of El Plan, whither some Spanish shepherds were known to have taken their flocks. The mother and cubs would probably remain either among or above the pine woods which clothed the southern side of our valley. Now, if the south wind held, what we had to do was simple enough. We had only to mount the opposite slopes towards the spot where the tracks had been seen, and there was little danger of our mounting so high as to place ourselves between the wind and our game. It was further considered advisable that we should separate into two parties, one of which should have for its object the destruction of Mr. Bruin, while the other should account for Mrs. B. and the children. This arrangement was not agreed to without some discussion and alternative suggestions, for Percival always hated to do as he was told; but it was the one finally adopted; and when the morning broke soft and cloudy, with a light breeze blowing in our faces, Percival and his party set off to the westward in the direction of El Plan, I and mine heading for the pine woods immediately facing us.

"That ought to give you the best chance, Oliver," said my friend generously as we parted.

I don't know when I have passed a more thoroughly comfortless hour than that which we spent in clambering up through those dense woods. The mountain-side was very precipitous; we had to advance as gingerly as possible, so as to avoid making any noise, and whenever I slipped or trod on a dry twig, Jean-Pierre, the chasseur who was in command of me, turned round, making hideous faces and cursed me under his breath. Furthermore, I couldn't help thinking that if the bear chose to appear suddenly at this stage of the proceedings it would be an awkward business for all of us.

We encountered no bear in the woods; but when at length we rose above the region of trees and emerged upon a stretch of coarse grass, we were rewarded for our climb by discovering traces which there was no mistaking upon a patch of the fast-melting snow. Following these up hopefully, we soon found ourselves upon the edge of a tolerably extensive snow-field, across which the tracks were so distinct that Jean-Pierre declared that they were not an hour old. He further professed to be able to see that the beast had been moving upwards at a leisurely pace, having no suspicion of being pursued, and prophesied that we should catch him up on some cliffs to which he pointed, and which he calculated that it would take us something like an hour to reach.

I was very glad when we did reach them, for toiling up hill through soft snow is not my notion of enjoyment; but I was not particularly sanguine as to the chance of Bruin's having had the civility to wait for

us, and, once upon the bare rocks, we had no longer any clue to guide us to his whereabouts. Jean-Pierre, nevertheless, continued to be full of confidence. He went on ahead, skirting the face of the precipice, where there was just foothold and no more, and the rest of us followed. After a time he held up his hand to stop us, bent down and examined the rock where a slight sprinkling of snow had lodged, advanced a little way, came back again, and then, pointing to a deep cleft just in front of us, exclaimed, "*Il est là !*"

I was at once posted at the entrance of this fissure and warned—in order to steady my nerves, I suppose—that if I missed I was a dead man; after which a stone was thrown in. No result. A second and a larger one, however, elicited a deep *gr-r-r-r*, which put an end to all doubt.

"Attention, *m'sieur*, *s'il vous plaît !*" sung out Jean-Pierre, and he fired into the chasm.

Immediately a large dark mass hurled itself out through the smoke. I suppose I must have taken aim, though I can't say that I have any recollection of doing so, for the next instant a fine large bear lay stone-dead at my feet.

Well, I dare say we kicked up rather more row over it than we need have done (Percival declared afterwards that he could have heard us yelling ten miles away); but I think perhaps it might count as an extenuating circumstance that this was my first bear. As for the natives, of course they ought to have known better.

So far, everything had gone quite according to programme, except that it was the old he-bear, not his partner, that I had killed; but now came the question of whether we were to rest satisfied with what we had accomplished and return to camp, or whether we should push on and try to effect a junction with Percival. After some debate it was agreed that Jean-Pierre and I should adopt the latter course. I quite admit that this was all wrong; but I was flushed with success, and I thought, supposing that Percival should happen to miss, what a thousand pities it would be that there should not be somebody at hand to back him up. So we set our faces westwards and downwards, and in due course of time reached the outskirts of the woods where we supposed that our companions would be.

I don't think we had been five minutes off the snow when I heard something crashing among the trees beneath us. I caught a momentary glimpse of a great lumbering body, and directly afterwards I distinctly saw a half-grown cub dashing helter skelter after it. I fired almost at random, and I need hardly add that I missed. The crashing sound grew fainter and fainter, and then I looked at Jean-Pierre and Jean-Pierre looked at me, and then we both whistled.

Well might we whistle! I prefer to draw a veil over our meeting with Percival which speedily ensued. I could not say much. My behaviour had certainly been bad enough to provoke anybody, and "*d——d*"

unsportsmanlike" was perhaps not too severe a description to give of it; still I don't think he would have been quite so infuriated had I not been compelled to acknowledge that I had not only robbed him of his share of the day's sport, but had previously been quite successful in securing my own. When he heard that, his indignation knew no bounds. He swore the whole thing had been done on purpose; he vowed he would never go out with me again so long as he lived; he stamped and danced about, and I must say made a great fool of himself. I am quite sure that if I had conducted myself after that fashion everybody present would simply have roared with laughter; but none of us laughed at Percival. The fact is that there was something rather terrible about the man, though I don't know that I could exactly say in what it consisted.

At length his fury spent itself, and we set off sadly and solemnly to return to the valley, Jean-Pierre and I hanging our heads like naughty boys, the rest of the Jeans and Pierres and Jean-Pierres slouching after us with somewhat scared faces, and Percival striding along by himself in deep dudgeon.

The day was not to end without another breeze. In the course of the afternoon it was suddenly discovered that we were out of everything. There was no tea left, no bread, and not a drop of wine. Why these deficiencies had not been mentioned to us before we set out for Luchon, where we could easily have laid in a fresh stock of provisions, I don't know; but Jean said he thought Pierre had told us, and Pierre thought Jean had spoken, and Jean-Pierre had not considered it his business to interfere; and so there was a good all-round wrangle, in the midst of which Percival worked himself up into one of his paroxysms. All that was necessary was that one man should be sent down to Venasque, the nearest Spanish town, to get what we required; but this would not satisfy him. He declared that every one of them should go, and that they should walk all night, so as to be back before our breakfast hour in the morning.

"Allez-vous-en, the whole lot of you!" he shouted. "Entendez-vous?—je veux être seul. Take yourselves off, you lazy, garlic-eating devils, and let's have a little peace for one night."

The whole troop marched away without much protestation. I dare say they were not sorry to escape from this raving Englishman. Afterwards I wondered whether Percival had had a deliberate design in his mind when he dismissed them; but, looking back upon it all, I am inclined to think that he had not, and that what followed was the result of mere accident and opportunity.

He was quiet enough, though portentously gloomy, until the time came for us to partake of our evening meal. We had to collect the wood for our bonfire ourselves, and we had to cook our soup ourselves, and a nice mess we made of it. All this was sufficiently uncomfortable, and did not serve to improve my friend's temper; but the worst was to come. Being without wine, we were obliged to fall back upon brandy-and-water

for our drink, and I noticed with some uneasiness that Percival was making no use of the water at all. At last I rather foolishly ventured upon a gentle remonstrance, whereupon he promptly filled his glass with raw brandy, and tossed it off at a draught.

"You're a devilish hard fellow to please, Oliver, I must say," he remarked. "One would have thought you'd have been satisfied with spoiling my sport, and not wanted to spoil my dinner into the bargain. Deuce take it all, man; you don't suppose I'm going to let you tell me what I'm to drink, do you?"

The upshot of it was that by the time that we turned in he was anything but sober, though he was able to keep his legs and to talk without knocking his words together.

"Got your revolver?" he called out, just as I was dropping off to sleep.

We thought it as well to have revolvers always handy, for we had heard no very good report of the sparse inhabitants of those valleys.

"Oh, yes; all right," I replied. "Good-night." And I rolled over on my side.

But I had hardly closed my eyes before he disturbed me again by asking suddenly: "I say, Oliver, did you ever fight a duel?"

"Fight a duel?" I repeated drowsily. "No, never; did you?"

"No," he answered in a cool, casual sort of tone; but I don't see why I shouldn't fight one now. I think I will."

That woke me up. "What are you talking about?" I exclaimed. "Who are you going to fight with here?"

"Why, with you, of course," said he. "I'm not afraid. Now then—mind yourself." And without more ado he suited the action to the word.

A flash, a loud report, and the whistling of a bullet past my ear brought me to a realising sense of the pleasant position that I was in. I was out of that tent and behind the biggest rock that I could find before you could have said "Knife!" My nimbleness astonished myself. Mercifully there was no moon, and the red glare of our camp fire only served to make the shadows blacker.

Percival blundered out after me, cursing and swearing. "Stand up, you skulking devil!" he roared. "Why don't you stand up and fight like a man?" And bang went another barrel.

"Now this time," said he with tipsy solemnity, "I'm going to take a careful aim and hit you. Oh, I see you, you beggar!—don't you flatter yourself that you're invisible."

The worst of it was that I was by no means sure that he didn't see me. He advanced with slow, unsteady steps, and began prowling round my rock, while I, crouching upon all fours, dodged him by a succession of noiseless hops, like a huge toad. Bang! bang! went two more barrels. "That makes four," thinks I. Whether he saw me or not, I saw him plainly enough, and I had my own loaded revolver in my hand all the time. I don't think I ever felt more tempted to shoot a man in

my life. Fortunately he let off his last two barrels before the temptation became too strong for me. One of the bullets passed over my head, and I heard the other strike the ground beside me. Then I rose erect, feeling myself master of the situation.

"Now, Percival," I said, "I could shoot you six times over, if I chose; but of course I shall do nothing of the kind. Go and lie down. You're very drunk, you know, and——"

"That's a lie!" he interrupted.

"Very well. Lie down and go to sleep, anyhow. Perhaps you'll have the grace to beg my pardon to-morrow morning."

He growled and blustered a good deal; but eventually he did return to the tent and threw himself down. I then proceeded to take certain precautionary measures; after which I, too, stretched myself on the ground. But no sooner had I done so than up the brute jumped again.

"No good trying to sleep," he said; "slow work sleeping. Let's have another duel. Where's the cartridges?"

"Every single cartridge that we possess is safe at the bottom of the stream," answered I, with a chuckle; for I had just had time to anticipate that danger. I cared very little for his curses and threats, knowing that, if the worst came to the worst, I had it in my power to disable him; and I suppose he was sober enough to understand that too, for he desisted after a time, and apparently went off to sleep at last. I don't think I was many minutes in following his example. I wonder now at my temerity; but the fact was I was so dead tired that it was as much as I could do to hold my eyes open until he began to snore; and, besides, I didn't see that he could do me any harm, now that I was possessed of the one effective fire-arm that remained to us.

That only shows what an ass I was. The next thing of which I was conscious was that Percival was standing over me in the grey light of the dawn with my revolver in his hand. "And now, Master Oliver," said he, I think I've pretty well turned the tables upon you."

Indeed he had! I gave myself up for lost, and I hope I may never again feel as frightened as I did at that moment. But Percival burst out laughing.

"You stupid old fool!" he said quite amiably; "do you take me for a murderer? It was all a joke, my firing at you last night. I only wanted to scare you, and I was no more drunk than you are."

I didn't in the least believe him; but it seemed more politic to pretend to do so.

"Come along up the hills and see the sunrise," he went on. "A breath of fresh air will do us both good."

I demurred to this proposition, alleging, what was perfectly true, that I hadn't had half my fair share of sleep; but I added politely that I hoped he wouldn't let me prevent him from climbing to any height that he pleased.

"Confound you!" he exclaimed angrily, "I believe you're in a funk

of me. Look here, then." He caught me by the arm, dragged me rather roughly out of the tent, and, flinging my revolver into the torrent, "Will that satisfy you?" he asked.

It was a pretty cool way of disposing of my property; but then, to be sure, I had drowned his cartridges. The end of it was that I had to go with him. Anything for peace, I thought; and I reflected with comfort that the guides would be back in the course of a few hours, after which my final farewell to this red-haired ruffian should very soon be spoken.

Percival led the way across to the northern side of our narrow valley, and we were soon scrambling up over boulders and slippery shale at a great pace, he whistling and singing, apparently in the highest spirits, and I silent, sulky, and out of breath. From time to time I suggested that we had mounted high enough; but he always replied briskly, "Oh, dear, no! we shall have to do another five hundred feet at least before we can get anything of a view, and there's heaps of time." And then he went on sniggering to himself, as though at some first-rate joke.

It was horribly unpleasant. I was beginning to have a very strong suspicion that the man was off his head. Drunk he was not; for he never made a false step, and we had already passed some places which demanded a steady head; but his manner was decidedly odd, and, when he turned to speak to me, I saw a light in his eyes which I didn't like. I suppose it must have taken us the best part of two hours to reach the edge of the glacier which sloped upwards towards the summit of the ridge that separated us from France. By that time the sun had caught the higher peaks and the fleecy clouds around and below them; and I dare say the spectacle was a very exquisite one. Some people, I know, go into raptures over a sunrise; but I am not one of those people. I always loathe everything until I have had my breakfast; and the circumstances of this particular occasion were such that the snow and the sky might have clothed themselves in all the colours of the rainbow, with a hundred and fifty intermediate tints to boot, and have left me perfectly unmoved.

One thing I was quite determined about: I didn't mean to skip over hidden crevasses at the heels of a maniac; and, to show how determined I was, I sat me down doggedly on a rock, and observed: "That's enough for me. Not a step further do I go."

"Just as you like," answered Percival, with more suavity than I had expected of him. "Oliver, old chap," he continued, seating himself close beside me, and assuming an extremely friendly and confidential tone, "I want you to tell me something. It's of no great consequence; but I've a fancy to know. What did Miss Neville say to you in that last letter of hers?"

Perhaps it would have been wiser to tell him the truth, or a part of the truth; but I was cold and hungry and cross, and to have this tiresome subject reopened just when I was beginning to hope that the moment of my release was at hand was too much for me.

"Oh, bother!" I exclaimed. "I can't tell you all she said, and if I could, I wouldn't. I never show my letters."

"You read me her first one," retorted Percival.

"Yes; and a precious fool I was to do it. If you want to hear about her, you had better write to her yourself; I can't undertake the duties of a go-between."

Percival began to frown and glare. "Now, I'll tell you what it is, Oliver," he said; "I mean to have this out of you by fair means or foul. You had better make up your mind to that."

Nobody can say that, in all my previous wrangles with Percival, I had not been forbearance itself; but there is a point at which, like the traditional worm, I turn; and that point he had now reached. I refused point-blank to give him the information he asked for, and couched my refusal in forcible terms.

The next minute I was lying upon my face, and Percival, kneeling on the small of my back, was tying my arms tightly behind me with a silk handkerchief. The fellow was as strong as Samson, and I, as I have said before, am but a wee man. Successful resistance was hopeless; but I let out with my feet to the best of my ability, and had the pleasure of catching him one on the shin which I don't think he could have liked. He made no complaint, however, but quietly finished his operation, picked me up under his arm like a feather, and carried me, struggling and helpless, upwards. "You'd better keep still, unless you want to kill us both," was all that he said; and indeed I thought it as well to take his advice. How on earth he managed to scramble up the face of those rocks with a man under his arm is more than I can explain; but he did it (not without bumping and scraping me considerably, though); and after a bit we came to a narrow ledge. There he deposited me, and, descending rapidly some ten or twelve feet, contemplated me with a sigh of satisfaction.

"Now, my boy," said he, "you stay there till you have answered my question."

"Then I shall stay here for the rest of my life," I returned.

I suppose no man was ever placed in a more ridiculous position. To give in would have been too humiliating; to descend from my perch without the use of my hands was out of the question, and to get my hands free seemed scarcely less so. Of course, however, I made a vigorous attempt. I tugged, I strained, I twisted and contorted myself in every possible way, while he stood below and laughed at me; but it was all in vain, and the only result of my writhing was that a lot of things rolled out of my pocket, among which was the very letter over which we had been fighting. Percival put his foot upon it just in time to save it from fluttering away before the wind.

"It strikes me that I can find out as much as I want now without your help," said he, holding up his prize triumphantly.

"Very well," I said. "Come here and untie me, then."

But he shook his empty head sagaciously. "Not so fast, my good friend. I suspect you of treachery. Either you are engaged to your cousin, or you have been telling her things about me which you don't want me to know of. We'll just see about that before we release you."

Percival was a gentleman by birth and bringing-up, and perhaps, when it came to the point, he did not altogether enjoy the sensation of looking at a letter addressed to another man. He stood for some few minutes with his back turned towards me, gazing abstractedly at the sunny mountain-tops opposite, and tapping his chin with the envelope. At length he turned round, and called out—

"I'll give you another chance. For the last time, will you tell me what is in this letter?"

"No," I shouted back resolutely, "I won't! Read it, if you don't mind behaving like a cad; and when you have quite done, perhaps you will be so good as to step up here and unloose me."

He made no reply, but stood thoughtfully tapping his chin with the letter, as before, and finally moved slowly away downhill. For a minute or two I heard the sound of his footsteps; then, every now and again, the clatter of dislodged stones, which showed me that he was still descending; then came profound silence. Uncomfortable as my position was, I was by no means impatient for his return. It was quite on the cards that, in the first access of frenzy which a perusal of Florry's cruel postscript might be expected to arouse, he might come tearing back and let off steam by flinging me over the precipice; and the longer he took to think about it the better, I felt, would be my chance of escaping with a whole skin and unbroken bones. But when a very long time had elapsed, and the sun had risen high into the heavens, and there was neither sound nor sign of Percival, I began to grow seriously uneasy. Could it be possible that the miscreant had meant to leave me there to perish miserably? Eventually I put my pride in my pocket, and shouted. The only answer that came to me was a succession of mocking echoes of my own voice—ahoy!—hoy!—hoy!—fainter and fainter, as the cliffs tossed it to and fro. Then I made more desperate and vain efforts to free myself. Then I peered over the brink of my ledge, and convinced myself that it would be madness to attempt to scramble down. Then I tried to fray through the silk handkerchief that bound me by rubbing it against the rock; but I was too tightly secured to move my arms to any purpose, and my muscles were so strained that every movement was an agony.

I don't know how long I fretted and fumed on that narrow shelf, parched with thirst, in considerable pain, and—I frankly confess—in a mortal fright; but I afterwards calculated that I must have been there quite three hours before I resolved in despair to take my chance of scrambling down without assistance. I wriggled over the edge, got one foot firm into a crevice, cautiously lowered the other, and then, as might have been expected, down I went, head over heels into

space. There was a tremendous crash, and that is all that I remember about it.

When I came to myself, I was lying on a grassy slope, with Jean-Pierre pouring brandy down my throat, and an assemblage of white-faced Pierres and Jeans kneeling round me. I was pretty well knocked about; but I was not broken anywhere, and Jean-Pierre began to praise the saints loudly when I sat up and asked for some water.

"You gave us a fine fright, monsieur," he said. "A pretty thing it would have been for us if we had had to go back to France and say that both our gentlemen were killed!"

"Both!" I ejaculated. "You don't mean to say that Mr. Percival is dead!"

"Mon Dieu! monsieur," returned Jean-Pierre in a tone of gentle remonstrance, "how would you have a man drop down a sheer three hundred feet upon his head, and live?"

Whether it was accident or design that brought about poor Percival's death, I cannot, of course, say. That he was not accountable for his actions on that last morning of his life I am quite convinced. I had to give some explanation to the guides of the circumstance that I had been found with my arms tied behind me, and I did so by telling them that my unfortunate friend had gone out of his mind before treating me in that way. This I firmly believe to have been the truth; and they agreed with me that he had for some time past been more mad than sane. They further concurred in my opinion that it could do no possible good, and would probably only cause troublesome complications, to make all the facts known to the authorities. Luckily for us, the authorities were less troublesome than an English coroner's jury would have been, and it was neither supposed nor suggested that my own fall had been due to any other causes than the inexperience and foolhardiness which, as I was told, had proved fatal to my companion.

When I next saw Mrs. Lacy—which was rather more than a year afterwards—she expressed a great deal of concern at the fate of the hapless man with the red hair, and was eager for fuller particulars than she had as yet been able to obtain. I gratified her curiosity as well as I could, and dwelt a good deal upon Percival's recklessness; but I did not think it necessary to say anything about the letter which we had no small difficulty in forcing out of his stiffened fingers when his body was carried back to camp.

W. E. N.

The Boke of St. Albans.

THERE is a cycle in the favourite quotations which do duty at political meetings or in the House of Commons, according to which certain lines of poetry recur after a lapse of, it may be, a few years, it may be a generation. Such a couplet, for instance, as

Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade;
A breath can make them as a breath has made,

appears about once in ten years; and it needs not the memory of a Macaulay to assign it to its speaker, and even to name the debate which it illustrated. Other quotations, however, are universally in favour, especially with the Conservative county member who has not forgotten all that Eton and "Smalls" taught him. We could almost predict the exact point in any county meeting when the caution of some rustic Nestor will clothe its sentiments in the trite words "Timeo Danaos," &c., or its equally well-known brother, "Rusticus expectat." An article might easily be written on this phenomenon, and on the political complexion assumed by the stock quotations of the reviews and of Parliament. But our purpose is rather to point out an analogy to this curious fact in the singular law of mental association by which some book becomes especially dear to an age or a brotherhood of literature. Thus, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* fell in with the predominant literary taste of the latter part of last century and the beginning of this, and it has since gone out of favour till our own time. In Sir W. Scott's and Mr. Scrope's days, numerous references were made in popular writings to the *Boke of St. Albans*. Many books, however, are oftener talked about than known, and the *Boke* is certainly one of these. Indeed, until the last few months, it was not always easy even for the student to acquire any knowledge of this celebrated volume. The originals of the first edition yet in existence might probably be counted on the fingers of one hand, while the later ones are themselves scarce and costly. Haslewood's reproduction, in the year 1812, soon became practically unattainable, and the same hateful fate in the eyes of book-buyers overtook Pickering's charming reprint of the "Fysshynge with an Angle" of the date 1827. In the last few months an admirable reproduction of the *Boke* has been issued by an enterprising London publisher, so that for the time being the quaint black-letter pages and sententious wisdom of Dame Juliana Berners are within the reach of all book-lovers. We say for the present, advisedly, as the edition will certainly be speedily exhausted, the present being peculiarly the age of such reproductions of old books.

The originals of any celebrated or scarce work can now be bought in most cases only by the wealthy. Every sale shows this more decisively than the last, though the prices obtained for rarities at the late Mr. Laing's sale cannot, it may be thought, be well exceeded in this generation. But such books may now be regarded not only as the natural prey of the bibliomaniac, but as being a valuable investment. Should the very improbable contingency ever occur of their price falling in our country, America, with its eager legion of book-lovers, their purses well filled with gold, will only too gladly purchase them; while Australia, New Zealand, and several other vigorous young colonies are waiting to take their part in the competition for old books before many years have elapsed. The demand for reproductions, therefore, may be considered as yet to be only in its infancy. Leaving the great publishing clubs—such as the Camden, Surtees, and the like—out of the question, the lover of scarce books owes much gratitude to the two *presentes divi*, Mr. Arber and Mr. E. Stock, for their reproductions of rare books and editions. Impecunious book-hunters gladly cherish, as second only to the originals, such books as the copy of the first edition of Walton's *Compleat Angler*, the reprint of Elyot's the *Governour*, and by no means least, the reproduction of the *Boke of St. Albans* by an indelible photographic process.

It would have been of little use last year to have written an account of the *Boke*. Now that it is generally accessible, however, no apology is needed for a survey of a volume so celebrated and yet so little known, round which a halo of romance hangs in regard to its supposed writer, which has so greatly contributed to form the conception of sports held in honour ever since its publication by English gentlemen, and which possesses many other points of interest to every student of his own language. The manners and tone of thought of the higher classes at the close of the Wars of the Roses are clearly reflected in it. A sharp line yet divides the aristocrat and "gentilman" from the "ungentill men." The "artycles of gentilnes," the pride of old and high lineage, and bearing of coat armour are strongly insisted upon throughout the book; common men, hinds, and "rascal" are scarcely named. Their very existence is alien to the theory of royal and high-bred sport which is here expounded. It needed many a doughty conflict, both in argument at Westminster and in blows, which have often proved superior to argument, on English ground, before the middle class was able to assert not merely its liberties but its corporate existence; and before still humbler men, by fighting side by side with their lords, engendered that sense of brotherhood which only died out in the chilling apathy of last century. It is seldom, however, that a nobler and better book has been written from a distinctly aristocratical standpoint than this of which it is our purpose to treat.

About a quarter of a mile south-east of the abbey of St. Alban, not far from the little river Ver, in which Dame Juliana Berners may have fished, and which is yet renowned for its trout, lie the scanty ruins of

Sopwell nunnery. The ancient well from which the name was derived is yet in existence—situated nearly in the line between St. Albans and the Daughter House—and is indicated by a protecting arch of brickwork, and a tree planted hard by it. Of this nunnery the authoress of the *Boke* was certainly an inmate, and most probably, as tradition has handed down, its prioress. Her name, indeed, does not appear in the list of the prioresses of Sopwell; but there is a gap in their enumeration between 1430 and 1480, in which upholders of the time-honoured belief may legitimately insert the Dame, if they will. The nunnery itself had been founded, under the rule of St. Benedict, about 1140, and was subject to the abbot of St. Albans. Its rule of life was very strict, and at first the nuns had been enclosed under lock and key, made additionally secure by the seal of the abbot for the time being upon the door; * but gradually the discipline was relaxed, and, without accusing the inmates of Sopwell of the license and ill-living which has earned an evil notoriety for many religious houses prior to the Reformation,† it is quite conceivable that the prioress of this house and her favoured dames might have allowed themselves a decent liberty during which the sports of the field alternated with the holier exercises of devotion. At the dissolution of St. Albans abbey in 1540, when one Richard Boreman (or Stevynnacke) was abbot, the monastic buildings and all connected with them were granted to Sir Richard Lee, and he at once commenced demolishing the whole. Sopwell escaped this fate for the time, and was even repaired from the ruins of the Mother House, but itself fell into decay in the reign of Charles II. ‡ A legend mentioned by Camden relates that Henry VIII. had married Anna Boleyn in the nunnery of Sopwell, but Shakespeare follows a different account. Many celebrated historic scenes surround it, without having recourse to doubtful glories. Lord Bacon's name is imperishably connected with St. Albans. Battle-fields, where the best blood of England was spilt in civil strife, environ it. Ostorius has left his name upon a hill hard by; while Hatfield House may be seen in the distance, where Elizabeth, as the story runs, heard, while sitting under an oak tree, of the death of her sister Mary. If we are most impressed by the size and architecture of St. Albans abbey, the prioress of Sopwell may perhaps have found in the well-watered, well-wooded neighbourhood where her lot was cast, an incentive to follow the field sports which are so characteristically connected in the *Boke* with her memory. The well-known character of Mary, Queen of Scots, shows the passionate enthusiasm with which, a century after Dame Juliana's time, high-born ladies devoted themselves to hunting and hawking.

It would be unfair to the reader not to tell him that Dame Juliana Berners is a somewhat legendary personage, and that a keen literary

* See Chauncy, quoted by Mr. Blades (Preface to *Boke of St. Albans*, page 13).

† See, however, Abp. Morton's letter to the Abbot of St. Albans in 1489 (Froude's *History of England*, Vol. II. cabt. edit., p. 307).

‡ Dr. Nicholson's *Guide to the Abbey of St. Alban*, pages 36 and 86.

battle has been fought over her life. The usual belief is that mentioned above, which relates that having been a Dame of the House (that is, a sister able to pay for her maintenance, and so placed on a higher footing in the establishment than the ordinary nuns who performed the menial tasks of the little community), she was at length chosen prioress. Chauncy and Haslewood assign her a distinguished lineage, drawing out her pedigree from Sir John Berners, of Berners Roding, county Essex, who died in 1347. His son, Sir James, was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1388. The family branched out into Sir Humphrey Bourchier, who was slain at Barnet, fighting for Edward IV., and was a son of one Margery Berners. His son is the translator of Froissart. Thence it stretches to Jane, who was mother of Sir Thomas Knyvet, whose great-great-grandson left a sole heir, Katharine. She married Richard Bokenham, Esq.; to whom the barony of Berners was adjudged in 1720. The Dame herself is supposed to have been the daughter of Sir James Berners. The legend continues that she probably spent her youth at the court, and shared in the woodland sports then fashionable, thus acquiring a sound knowledge of hunting, hawking, and fishing. Having withdrawn from the world, and finding plenty of leisure time in the cloister, it is next believed that she committed to writing her memories of these fascinating sports. Indeed, if she were an active prioress, the exigencies of fast days would demand that she should busy herself in the supply of fish required for the sisterhood; so that it is quite possible that, like all other observant anglers, she grew old daily learning more of that craft whereof she treats more fully and in a clearer order than the other subjects of the *Boke* are handled. Be this as it may, no enthusiastic disciple of angling need disabuse himself of his time-honoured belief that Dame Juliana was a patroness of his sport; while if any will be a sceptic and apply the destructive criticism which is so fashionable in our times to these details of the Dame's life, he, too, is at perfect liberty so to please himself. Facts are of the scantiest for both alike. Let us hope, however, that few will carry their disbelief to the same point as does Mr. Blades: "What is really known of the Dame is almost nothing, and may be summed up in the following few words. She probably lived at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and she possibly compiled from existing MSS. some rhymes on hunting." It is quite possible to indulge a spirit of destructive criticism beyond the limits of good sense. The treatise of hunting in the *Boke* ends: "Explicit Dam Julyans Barnes in her boke of huntyng;" while the extremes of practical acumen and rampant agnosticism meet amusingly enough in his further dictum: "Had the Dame Julyans Barnes of the fifteenth century lived now, she would have been just 'Mrs. Barnes.'"* But, in any case, we may picture the Dame solacing herself with her treatises among the ruthless battles, treasons, and executions which marked the Wars of the Roses, from which her own kith and kin had not escaped scot-free. And as the fairer vision of an Eng-

* See Mr. Blades's *Introduction* to Mr. Stock's *Reproduction*.

land united as of old under the rule of Henry VII. rose before her eyes, it is easy to fancy her resolving that her precepts shall be set before gentlemen by the marvellous art which Caxton had been introducing into England at his Westminster press, "the almonry, at the red pale." On a sudden she finds another of these wonder-working printers settled at her own doors, and at once makes over to him her manuscripts, much to the delectation of posterity.

Another literary puzzle is connected with the printer of the *Boke* at St. Albans. He is only known from Wynken de Worde's reprint of *St. Albans Chronicle*, the colophon of which states: "Here endith this present chronicle, compiled in a book and also enprinted by our sometime schoolmaster of St. Alban." Whoever he was, he plied his press from 1480 to 1486, and issued eight works, the first six of which are in Latin. Towards the end of his life he seems to have grasped the fact that great distinction waited for him who should give to the English books in their own tongues; accordingly his last two folios, the *Boke* and *St. Albans Chronicle* (the latter consisting of Caxton's *Chronicles of England*, with a few additions on ecclesiastical events and Papal chronology), were printed in the vernacular. It is curious that without any further connection, as it seems, with the Westminster press, the schoolmaster printer obtained (and himself used for printing) an old and worn fount of type which had been discarded by Caxton. And after the stoppage of the St. Albans press this same fount returned to Westminster, and was actually used by Wynken de Worde in his reprint (1496-97) of the two English books which had been issued by the press of that place. Cardinal Wolsey is supposed to have put a stop to all printing at St. Albans during his abbacy. He had certainly expressed his dislike of the art in a convocation held in St. Paul's Chapter House, when he told his clergy that if they did not in time suppress printing, it would prove fatal to the Church. In point of workmanship, Mr. Blades deems that the St. Albans printer, especially in his English books, is much inferior to the contemporary issues of the Westminster press; the types being worse, as well as the arrangement and presswork, while the ink is often very bad. Much, therefore, of the *Boke* is not very easy reading, especially if the student be unfamiliar with the early black-letter books.

As if to match all these uncertainties, even the bibliography of the *Boke* is beset with more than ordinary difficulties. The subjects on which it treats were in special favour with the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so that probably more editions of it than of any other profane book were then put forth, each differing either in printer's name or in the selection of the subjects of the *Boke*. Thus Wynken de Worde, before the fifteenth century closed, published two editions of it. In the next century Mr. Blades (who does not, however, profess to have exhausted the subject) enumerates sixteen more. W. Powell, in his edition of 1550, only reprinted the "Haukyng, huntynge, and fishynge." This last treatise was often printed separately. The celebrated Gervase Markham, in

1598, "reduced into a better method" the whole *Boke*; just as in 1614 a certain "S. T." reprinted it as *A Jewell for Gentry*. During the eighteenth century the rage for hawking and for heraldry had greatly died out; so that we only find one edition, namely, the *Boke of Cote Armour*, in 1793, reprinted by J. Dallaway. Were not the *Boke* celebrated from its own contents, it would be famous in the eyes of all bibliomaniacs from its rarity in any form, whether in black-letter or as a reprint. America possesses a reprint of the "Treatyse on Fysshynge," edited by Mr. Van Siclen, and published at New York in 1875. In his *Enemies of Books* Mr. Blades tells a story of an original black-letter copy of the *Boke* being sold no later than 1844 for literally a few pence, which causes a book-lover's mouth to water. A pedlar purchased it amongst other waste-paper from a poor widow at Blyton, in Lincolnshire, for ninepence, i.e. at the rate of one penny per pound! Sir C. Anderson soon afterwards offered the man five pounds for the *Boke*; but Mr. Stark, the well-known bookseller, eventually bought it for seven guineas, and sold it immediately on his return to London to the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville for seventy pounds or guineas. The book had been weeded out of the library at Thonock Hall, probably in ignorance of its nature and value. But such a chance as fell to this pedlar's lot does not often occur to the book-lover. He may sigh with Virgil's hero:—

Si nunc se nobis ille aureus
Ostendat!

Alas! the wish does not forthwith fulfil itself as in the case of *Aeneas*.

To turn to the contents of the *Boke*, differences are found from the very beginning. Thus the first edition (1486), containing the chief "plesures belongyng to gentill men hauyng delite therein," at that period is made up of four separate treatises on "Hawking," "Hunting," the "Lynage of Coote Armiris," and the "Blasyng of Armyes;" although a great deal of intercalated matter is interspersed, having as little connection with any of these treatises, or with each other, as the subjects usually found at the end of modern almanacs. The celebrated treatise on "Fishing" is added in the second edition. In 1586 (just a hundred years from its first publication) the work appears as the *Boke of St. Alban, Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, with the True Measures of Blowing*. The quaint and celebrated woodcuts are inserted in the second edition. These are three in number. The first consists of a group of men going hawking, while a hawk flies over them, and two dogs, like our Italian greyhounds, run at their side. The costume of the sportsmen is as noticeable as the character of their dogs. In the second appears a "bevy" or "sege" of fowls—we are uncertain which the Dame would have it called—some of which are flying, others swimming, and others, again, standing on the banks of a stream like Homer's fowls on the Cayster; a lion is seizing one of these, which looks like a bittern. The attitudes and drawing of the birds are delightfully

varied, and would prove invaluable for a reproduction of mediæval tapestry. The spirited woodcut in the "Treatyse on Fysshynge" is probably better known than the two just mentioned. The servant (perhaps intended for the portrait of a lay brother or one attached to Sopwell priory) is engaged with rueful face in capturing fish. His rod and line are extremely primitive, and he would have no chance of catching anything with them in the present day, when fish are supposed to be so highly "educated," owing to the constant persecution with bait and fly to which they are subjected. An open tub lies at his side, in which he is intended to place his captives, and keep them alive until they could be deposited in the "stew."

It is time, however, now that we have hawk on wrist and dog under the arm—as Harold is represented on the Bayeux tapestry when starting for Normandy—to give some notion of the *Boke*. In the first edition the treatise on "Falconry" has the first place, inasmuch as that sport was the most cherished recreation of all gentlemen and fair women at the time when the Dame was writing. To see the absorbing character of its pursuit, it is only needful to reflect how much of the terminology connected with it still lingers in the English language. A reference to Shakespeare will answer the same end. He is indebted to hawking for numerous scattered expressions, and for imagery which occasionally runs through a whole speech. Mr. Harting, in his *Ornithology of Shakespeare*, has carefully collected together all these references in the poet's works, and commented lucidly upon them from a practical acquaintance with the noble art of falconry. Without any such modern inventions as preface, or even title page, the Dame begins at once:—

In so moch that gentill men and honest persones haue greete delite in haukyng, and desire to haue the maner to take haukys; and also how and in waat wyse they shulde gyde theym ordynateli; and to know the gentill termys in comunyng of theyr haukys; and to understonde theyr sekeneses and enfirmittees; and also to knowe medicines for theym accordyng, and mony notabull termys that ben used in haukyng both of their haukys and of the fowles that their haukys shall fley. Therefore thys booke fowlowyng in a dew forme shewys veri knowlege of suche plesure to gentill men and psonys disposed to se itt.

Then succeeds a series of directions as to the correct terms to use in speaking of hawks at their different ages, together with an account of the mode in which they are to be reclaimed and dieted. Hawks appear to be subject to manifold diseases, the very names of which sound strange to the present generation, which too often strains every energy to kill hawks as pestilent vermin. The "ry," "frounce," "cray," and "aggreysteyne" are samples; while more familiar sufferings seem to have been their lot in podagra, which is more particularly described as gout in the head, throat, and reins respectively. Appropriate remedies are given for these and many more complaints, some of which receipts sound worse than any sufferings with which hawks can ever have been afflicted. Here is a comparatively mild "medecyne for the ry." "Take dayes

leeuys and stampe hem in a mortar, and wrynge owt the juse, and with a pinne put it in the hawkis nares [nostrils] ones or twyes when the hawke is smalle goorged, and anon after let hir tyre, and she shall be hoole as a fysh." A list of the proper terms to use in naming the different parts of the hawk comes next—his claws, feathers, legs, and the like. The "beam feathers" are described. The mode of flying them by putting up a partridge, and the way in which the victorious hawk is afterwards to be rewarded, is enlarged upon. The "creaunce" and "jesses" (which latter term has been rendered immortal by Shakspeare) are next explained, together with the mode in which "to dispose and ordain your mewe." The fifty-three pages of the treatise conclude with directions respecting the bells which hawks are to wear (and which are still used by modern falconers in order to know the exact spot where the hawk may be crouching over her quarry in long grass or rushes); they are not to be too heavy, and the like. It is worth while transcribing some of these injunctions :—

Looke also that thay be sonowre and well sowndyng and shril, and not both of oon sowne, but that oon be a semitoyn under a noder, and that thay be hoole and not brokyn, and speciali in the sowndyng place; for and thay be brokyn thay wyll sowne full dulli.

Of spare hawke bellis ther is chooce and lyttill of charge of thaym, for ther beeth plenty.

Bot for goshawkes somtyme bellis of Melen [Milan] were calde the best, and thay be full goode, for thay comunely be sownden with silver and solde ther after. Bot ther be now used of Duchelande bellys of a towne calde durdright [Dordrecht], and thay be passing goode, for thay be well sortid, well sownded, sonowre of ryngyng in shrilnes, and passing well lastyng.

The commencement of the next subject is sufficiently quaint. This is supposed to have been prefixed by the "scolemaster" to the manuscript of the Dame, which begins forthwith in rude verse. In these verses she probably gives her own transcript of numerous rhymes current in her day, and forming, as it were, a catechism of sport. Thus the reader will note that the "dear child" is duly taught by one "Tristram." Sir Tristram was the Knight of the Round Table, most skilled in woodcraft, "Sir Tristram of the Woods," and to the magic of his name was assigned in the Dame's time the responsible duty of teaching the young noble and gentleman the needful terms of woodcraft. Here, however, are the preface and the verses, which latter, with all respect to the Dame, we fear can only be styled doggrel :—

Lyke wise as in the booke of hawkyng aforesayd are writyn and noted the termis of plesure belongyng to gentill men hauyng delite therin. In thes same maner thys booke folowyng shewith to such gentill personys the maner of huntynge for all maner of beestys, wether thay be beestys of venery, or of chace, or rascall. And also it shewith all the termys convenient as well to the howndys as to the beestys aforesayd. And in certayn ther be many dyuerse of thaym, as it is declared in the booke folowyng.

BESTYS OF VENERY.

Wheresoeuere ye fare by fryth or by fell,
 My dere chylde take hede how Tristram dooth you tell
 How many maner beestys of venery ther bere ;
 Lystyn to yowre dame and she shall you lere,
 Foure maner beestys of venery there are :
 The first of theym is the hert, the secunde is the hare,
 The boore is oon of tho, the wolff and not oon moo.

The capricious spelling and northern dialect of these verses is very noticeable. There was as yet no standard for orthography. The Lincolnshire labourer still uses the forms "yowre" and "yow" for "your" and "you," and "oon" for "one" is not unknown to him. Indeed, much of this treatise betrays the writer to have been of the north country.

There is no more attempt at arrangement of subjects in this than in the previous treatise. Thus how to describe the head of a hart succeeds in which the term "royal" may be noted—

When he hath autelere without any lett,

or when his horns have twelve tines, each distinct enough to hang a watch on, as modern Scotch venery describes it. The hunting, dressing, and breaking up of the roedeer comes next. It is described as "belling" (*i.e.* bellowing), a term which Sir W. Scott also applies to red deer. Then ensue the chase of the boar and the hare, with another account of a buck's horns. The different reasons for hunting different animals are prescribed in very indifferent verse; the reader is also taught how to "break up" a hart. This is at once followed by the only reference in the whole *Boke* to the authoress. The orthography of her name should be remarked—

Explicit Dam Julyans
 Barnes in her boke of huntynge.

Some more leaves remaining, the printer seems to have filled them with the most incongruous list of subjects; the names of the varieties of hounds, the properties of a good greyhound, concerning which we are told, "when he is commyn to the ninth yere, haue hym to the tanner." The points of a good horse, moral maxims—some in prose, some in verse, often of the rudest—succeed, as, for instance—

Fer from thy kynnysmen heste the,
 Wrath not thy neighborys next the,
 In a goode corne cuntre threste the,
 And sitte downe, Robyn, and rest the.

A more amusing list of the proper terms to use in describing various fowls, beasts, and classes of mankind is next given. These are correct expressions the modern reader may like to know—a herd of swans, "a nye (nide ?) of fisaunttys, a sege of herons, a muster of peacocks, an exalting of larks, a charm of goldfinches, a clatering of coughts, a pride of lions, a bevy of conies, a gaggle of geese" (this term is still used by wild fowlers), "a prudence of vicars, a school of clerks," and so

on, through some two hundred more. How fowls are to be described when served at table follows, and is succeeded by the same recondite wisdom on fishes; thus, a "tench sauced," and "eel trousoned," and a "trout gobetted," are *en règle*. Yet there was room; and in despair the printer appended a list of the shires and bishoprics of England, so that the exalted style and sonorous, if not fanciful, verse at the beginning of the treatise concludes like a child's geography—

Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne.

The third treatise, on coat armour, is divided into two parts: the first treating of its "lynage," and "how gentylmen shall be known from ungentylmen;" the second more technically entering into the "blasying" of arms. This treatise must have been of intense interest in the Middle Ages, when pride in ancient lineage and the science of heraldry held such a firm grasp over men's minds. It is now replete for us, with curious illustrations of the fabulous antiquity assigned by heralds to their favourite subject and its terms of art. Many quaint beliefs with which the Scriptures were supplemented by tradition are also apparent in it, and it throws much light upon allusions found in the poets of the Elizabethan era. Although these were familiar enough to readers of that time, they now require explanation. In short, it forms a useful book of reference for the heraldry of the fifteenth century, and contains literary associations and modes of thought which every student of its literature and customs must prize. In many respects it is the most curious of the three treatises, and will, perhaps, best repay the scholar. It begins—

Here in thys booke folowyng is determynd the lynage of Cote armiris, and how gentilmen shall be knowyn from ungentillmen, and how bondage began first in aungell and after succeeded in man kynde, as it is shewede in processe booths in the childer of Adam and also of Noe, and how Noe deuyded the worlde in iii partis to his iii sonnys. Also ther be shewyd the ix colowris in armys figured by the ix orderis of aungelis; and it is shewyd by the forsayd colowris wych ben worthy and wych ben royall, and of rigaliteis wiche ben noble and wiche ben excellent. And ther ben here the vertuys of chyalury and many other notable and famowse thyngys to the plesure of noble personys shall be shewyd as the werkys folowyng wittenesses who so ever likyth to se thaym and rede thaym wych were to longe now to rehers. And after theys notable thyngys aforesayd folowyth the blasying of all maner armys in latyn, french, and English.

The Dame begins in very early days with Lucifer and his millions of angels, so arriving at "the grand old gardener and his wife," Adam and Eve. Adam's arms consisted of a spade. Cain, who slew his brother, was the first churl. From Noah Cham became a churl for his "ungentilness; but of the offspring of the gentilman Jafeth that gentilman Jhesus was born very god and man, after his manhode kyng of the londe of Jude and of Jues, gentilman by is modre mary, prynce of Cote armure." The precious stones and colours of the science succeed; the virtues of chivalry, the divisions of gentlemen (spiritual and temporal), and that the king is the fountain of honour, are shown at length, followed by the technicalities of the science of arms and their elucidation.

The second part of the treatise is illustrated with charges of arms and scutcheons, giving a complete conspectus of heraldry as it was developed and practised in the fifteenth century. With much earnestness does the Dame explain these mystic terms which have long been consigned to Lethe, save with a few antiquarian heralds. We cannot but grieve at the degeneracy of our age when an aspiring Smith or ambitious Brown can obtain arms, pedigrees, mottoes, and supporters to any extent by applying to those obliging persons who advertise their readiness to assist gentlemen in want of ancestry. The Dame religiously begins her treatise with the Cross "in the wich thys nobull and myghtie prynce Kyng Arthure hadde grete trust so that he left his armys that he bare of iv dragonys and on that an other sheelde of iii crowns, and toke to his armys a crosse of silver in a feelde of verte, and on the right side an ymage of oure blessid Lady with hir sone in hir arme, and with that sign of the Cross he dyd mony maruells after as hit is writyn in the bookis of cronyclis of his dedys." It is needless to enter into the terms of art, which the Dame explains at considerable length.

Inasmuch as Dame Juliana Berners is perhaps most identified in popular estimation with the "Treatyse on Fysshynge with an Angle" (although, as said above, this treatise only appears in the second edition of the *Boke* in 1496), a few words may be added on this "lytyll plaunflet," as the authoress terms it, by way of conclusion. The black-letter fount is that belonging to Wynken de Worde at Westminster, and is much clearer and easier to read than the St. Alban typography. In other respects—size, paragraphs, orthography, and the like—this treatise matches the *Boke*. It is much better arranged, however, subject following subject in lucid arrangement as in a modern book, instead of the chaotic system on which the first edition proceeds. The "Treatyse" is undoubtedly the first English printed book on fishing. At Antwerp, indeed, an earlier tract on the same theme had been printed at the press of Van der Goes, probably in 1492, as Mr. Denison thinks, who is fortunate enough to possess a copy. The Dame treats in consecutive order of the "harness" necessary for the angler, giving full directions how it is to be made, and of the different kinds of fish and the baits proper for them. An eloquent preface shows how superior in all real enjoyment the practice of angling is to the sports of hunting, hawking, and fowling:—

The angler may haue no colde, nor no dysease nor angre, but yf he be causer hymself. For he maye not lese at the moost but a lyne or an hoke; of whyche he may haue store plente of his own makynge as this symple treatyse shall teche hym. So thenne his losse is not greuous and other greyffes may he not haue, sauynge but yf any fische breke away after that he is take on the hoke, or elles that he catche nought, whyche ben not greuous. For yf he faylle of one he maye not faylle of a nother yf he dooth as this treatyse techyth; but yf there be nought in the water. And yetatte the leest he hath his holsom walke and mery at his ease, a swete ayre of the swete sauoure of the meede floures: that makyth hym hungry. He hereth the melodious armony of foules. He seeth the younge swannes; heerons; duckes: cotes, and many other foules wyth theyr brodes; whyche me semyth better than alle the noyse of houndys: the blaste of hornys, and the scrye of foulis that hunters, fawkeners, and

foulers can make. And yf the angler take fyssh: surely thenne is there noo man merier than he is in his spyryte.

The reader will probably remember much in Walton which shows how indebted was the patriarch of fishermen to the Dame's words, while Burton deliberately inserts the whole of this passage, without acknowledging his indebtedness, in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*. This preface strikes the key-note of the whole treatise; and it is noticeable that thus early in the history of English fishing the angler is painted of that simple, guileless, contented disposition which he is generally supposed to owe to Walton's panegyrics of the art. The Dame views fishing as no easy means of filling the larder (though every word of her book proves that with the post she filled in the little priory of Sopwell she was by no means indifferent to this aspect of the craft), but as a wholesome discipline of spirit during recreation, a mode of attaining perfection, a religious exercise, a walking at peace with a man's neighbour and his God. All fishermen may be grateful to their patron for the high type of character which she sets before them as the disposition of the ideal angler. As in many similar cases, the Dame's words have probably conduced to multitudes of gentle anglers realising the higher and nobler side of their craft. The fact that it admits of such a lofty moral standard must with many prove the only justification for angling considered as the recreation of the gentleman, the scholar, and the divine. Thoreau, in one of his essays, feelingly laments his inability, with all his love for it, to go fishing as the years pass over him. Had he been a fly-fisher instead of a worm-angler (from which branch of the craft, *pace* its devotees, cruelty both to bait and fish is inseparable), and had he been able to enter into the devotional disposition of the Dame, which from the constitution of his mind he could not, he need never have made so touching a confession. The fly-fisher, as regards his quarry, the marvellous life-histories of the flies which he cunningly imitates in silk and feathers, and the varied aspects of nature among which he passes with a poet's eye, never finds his art pall upon him. Like Socrates, he grows old learning, and the wisdom which he imbibes is of the truest.

From our own commendation of fly-fishing, however, we would fain recall the reader to the conclusion of Dame Juliana's panegyric. No words more touching, more true, more genuine were ever written on the highest pleasures of the fisherman. They shall not be quoted here, in order that they may hold out an additional incentive for the angler who knows them not, to seek them in the original. Having endeavoured to set forth the many attractions which the *Boke of St. Albans* possesses for the sportsman, the antiquarian, and the philologist, we shall now take our leave of the reader, wishing for him, if he follows the admirable advice of the Dame—advice never more needed than in the present times—that her devout and closing words may be his:—"All those that done after this rule shall haue the blessynge of god and saynt Petyr, whyche he theym graunte that wyth his precyous blood vs boughte."

I Gondolier's Wedding.

THE night before the wedding we had a supper-party in my rooms. We were twelve in all. My friend Eustace brought his gondolier Antonio with fair-haired, dark-eyed wife, and little Attilio, their eldest child. My old gondolier, Francesco, came with his wife and two children. Then there was the handsome, languid Luigi, who, in his best clothes, looks fit for any drawing-room. Two other gondoliers, in dark blue shirts, completed the list of guests, if we exclude the maid Catina, who came and went about the table, laughing and joining in the songs, and sitting down at intervals to take her share of wine. The big room looking across the garden to the Grand Canal had been prepared for supper; and the company were to be received in the smaller, which has a fine open space in front of it to southwards. But as the guests arrived, they seemed to find the kitchen, and the cooking that was going on, quite irresistible. Catina, it seems, had lost her head with so many cuttle-fishes, *orai*, cakes, and fowls, and cutlets to reduce to order. There was, therefore, a great bustle below stairs; and I could hear plainly that all my guests were lending their making, or their marring, hands to the preparation of the supper. That the company should cook their own food on the way to the dining-room seemed a quite novel arrangement, but one that promised well for their contentment with the banquet. Nobody could be dissatisfied with what was everybody's affair.

(When seven o'clock struck, Eustace and I, who had been entertaining the children in their mothers' absence, heard the sound of steps upon the stairs. The guests arrived, bringing their own *risotto* with them. Welcome was short, if hearty. We sat down in carefully appointed order, and fell into such conversation as the quarter of San Vio and our several interests supplied. From time to time one of the matrons left the table and descended to the kitchen, when a finishing stroke was needed for roast pullet or stewed veal. The excuses they made their host for supposed failure in the dishes, lent a certain grace and comic charm to the commonplaces of festivity. The entertainment was theirs as much as mine; and they all seemed to enjoy what took the form by degrees of curiously complicated hospitality. I do not think a well-ordered supper at any *trattoria*, such as at first suggested itself to my imagination, would have given any of us an equal pleasure or an equal sense of freedom. The three children had become the guests of the whole party. Little Attilio, propped upon an air-cushion, which puzzled him exceedingly, ate through his supper and drank his wine with solid satisfaction, open-

ing the large brown eyes beneath those tufts of clustering fair hair which promise much beauty for him in his manhood. Francesco's boy, who is older and begins to know the world, sat with a semi-suppressed grin upon his face, as though the humour of the situation was not wholly hidden from him. Little Teresa too was happy, except when her mother, a severe Pomona, with enormous earrings and splendid fazzoletto of crimson and orange dyes, pounced down upon her for some supposed infraction of good manners—*creanza*, as they vividly express it here. Only Luigi looked a trifle bored. But Luigi has been a soldier, and has now attained the supercilious superiority of young manhood, which smokes its cigar of an evening in the piazza and knows the merits of the different cafés.

The great business of the evening began when the eating was over, and the decanters filled with new wine of Mirano circulated freely. The four best singers of the party drew together; and the rest prepared themselves to make suggestions, hum tunes, and join with fitful effect in choruses. Antonio, who is a powerful young fellow, with bronzed cheeks and a perfect tempest of coal-black hair in flakes upon his forehead, has a most extraordinary soprano—sound as a bell, strong as a trumpet, well-trained, and true to the least shade in intonation. Piero, whose rugged Neptunian features, sea-wrinkled, tell of a rough water-life, boasts a bass of resonant, almost pathetic, quality. Francesco has a *mezza voce*, which might, by a stretch of politeness, be called baritone. Piero's comrade, whose name concerns us not, has another of these nondescript voices. They sat together with their glasses and cigars before them, sketching part-songs in outline, striking the key-note—now higher and now lower—till they saw their subject well in view. Then they burst into full singing, Antonio leading with a metal note that thrilled one's ears, but still was musical. Complicated contrapuntal pieces, such as we should call madrigals, with ever-reviving refrains of "Venezia, gemma Triatica, sposa del mar," descending probably from ancient days, followed each other in quick succession. Barcaroles, serenades, love-songs, and invitations to the water, were interwoven for relief. One of these romantic pieces had a beautiful burden: "Dormi, o bella, o fingi di dormir," of which the melody was fully worthy. But the most successful of all the tunes were two with a sad motive. The one repeated incessantly "Ohimé! Mia madre morì;" the other was a girl's love lament: "Perchè tradirmi, perchè lasciarmi! prima d'amarmi non eri così!" Even the children joined in these; and Catina, who took the solo part in the second, was inspired to a great dramatic effort. All these were purely popular songs. The people of Venice, however, are passionate for operas. Therefore, we had duets and solos from "Ernani," the "Ballo in Maschera," and the "Forza del Destino," and one comic chorus from "Boccaccio," which seemed to make them wild with pleasure. To my mind, the best of these more formal pieces was a duet between Attila and Italia from some opera unknown to me, which

Antonio and Piero performed with incomparable spirit. It was noticeable how, descending to the people, sung by them for love at sea, or on excursions to the villages round Mestre, these operatic reminiscences had lost something of their theatrical formality, and assumed instead the serious gravity, the quaint movement, and marked emphasis which belong to popular music in northern and central Italy. An antique character was communicated even to the recitative of Verdi by slight, almost indefinable, changes of rhythm and accent. There was no end to the singing. "Siamo appassionati per il canto," frequently repeated, was proved true by the profusion and variety of songs produced from inexhaustible memories, lightly tried over, brilliantly performed, rapidly succeeding each other. Nor were gestures wanting—lifted arms, hands stretched to hands, flashing eyes, hair tossed from the forehead—unconscious and appropriate action—which showed how the spirit of the music and words alike possessed the men. One by one, the children fell asleep. Little Attilio and Teresa were tucked up beneath my Scotch shawl at two ends of a great sofa; and not even his father's clarion voice, in the character of Italia defying Attila to harm "le mie superbe città," could wake the little boy up. The night wore on. It was past one. Eustace and I had promised to be in the church of the Gesuati at six next morning. We, therefore, gave the guests a gentle hint, which they as gently took. With exquisite, because perfectly unaffected, breeding they sank for a few moments into common conversation, then wrapped the children up, and took their leave. It was an uncomfortable, warm, wet night of sullen Scirocco.

The next day, which was Sunday, Francesco called me at five. There was no visible sunrise that cheerless damp October morning. Gray dawn stole somehow imperceptibly between the veil of clouds and leaden waters, as my friend and I, well-sheltered by our *felze*, passed into the Giudecca, and took our station before the church of the Gesuati. A few women from the neighbouring streets and courts crossed the bridges in dragged petticoats, on their way to first mass. A few men, shouldering their jackets, lounged along the *Zattere*, opened the great green doors, and entered. Then suddenly Antonio cried out that the bridal party was on its way, not as we had expected, in boats, but on foot. We left our gondola, and fell into the ranks, after shaking hands with Francesco, who is the elder brother of the bride. There was nothing very noticeable in her appearance, except her large dark eyes. Otherwise, both face and figure were of a common type; and her bridal dress of sprigged grey silk, large veil and orange blossoms, reduced her to the level of a *bourgeoise*. It was much the same with the bridegroom. His features, indeed, proved him a true Venetian gondolier; for the skin was strained over the cheekbones, and the muscles of the throat beneath the jaws stood out like cords, and the bright blue eyes were deep-set beneath a spare brown forehead. But he had provided a complete suit of black for the occasion, and wore a shirt of worked cambric, which disguised what is

really splendid in the physique of these oarsmen, at once slender and sinewy. Both bride and bridegroom looked uncomfortable in their clothes. The light that fell upon them in the church was dull and leaden. The ceremony, which was very hurriedly performed by an unctuous priest, did not appear to impress either of them. Nobody in the bridal party, crowding together on both sides of the altar, looked as though the service was of the slightest interest and moment. Indeed, this was hardly to be wondered at: for the priest, so far as I could understand his gabble, took the larger portion for read, after muttering the first words of the rubric. A little carven image of an acolyte—a weird boy who seemed to move by springs, whose hair had all the semblance of painted wood, and whose complexion was white and red like a clown's—did not make matters more intelligible by spasmodically clattering responses.

After the ceremony we heard mass, and contributed to three distinct offertories. Considering how much account even two *soldi* are to these poor people, I was really angry when I heard the copper shower. Every member of the party had his or her pennies ready, and dropped them into the boxes. Whether it was the effect of the bad morning, or the ugliness of a very ill-designed *barocco* building, or the fault of the fat oily priest, I know not. But the *sposalizio* struck me as tame and cheerless, the mass as irreverent and vulgarly conducted. At the same time there is something too impressive in the mass for any perfunctory performance to divest its symbolism of sublimity. A Protestant Communion Service lends itself more easily to degradation by unworthiness in the minister.

We walked down the church in double file, led by the bride and bridegroom, who had knelt during the ceremony with the best man—*compare*, as he is called—at a narrow *prie-dieu* before the altar. The *compare* is a person of distinction at these weddings. He has to present the bride with a great pyramid of artificial flowers, which is placed before her at the marriage-feast, a packet of candles, and a box of bonbons. The *comfits*, when the box is opened, are found to include two magnificent sugar babies lying in their cradles. I was told that a *compare*, who does the thing handsomely, must be prepared to spend about 100 francs upon these presents, in addition to the wine and cigars with which he treats his friends. On this occasion the women were agreed that he had done his duty well. He was a fat, wealthy little man, who lived by letting market-boats for hire on the Rialto.

From the church to the bride's house was a walk of some three minutes. On the way, we were introduced to the father of the bride—a very magnificent personage, with points of strong resemblance to Vittorio Emanuele. He wore an enormous broad-brimmed hat and emerald green earrings, and looked considerably younger than his eldest son, Francesco. Throughout the *nozze*, he took the lead in a grand imperious fashion of his own. Wherever he went, he seemed to fill the place, and

was fully aware of his own importance. In Florence I think he would have got the nickname of *Tacchin*, or turkey-cock. Here at Venice the sons and daughters call their parent briefly *Vecchio*. I heard him so addressed with a certain amount of awe, expecting an explosion of bubbly-jock displeasure. But he took it, as though it was natural, without disturbance. The other *Vecchio*, father of the bridegroom, struck me as more sympathetic. He was a gentle old man, proud of his many prosperous, laborious sons. They, like the rest of the gentlemen, were gondoliers. Both the *Vecchi*, indeed, continue to ply their trade, day and night, at the *traghetto*.

Traghetti are stations for gondolas at different points of the canals. As their name implies, it is the first duty of the gondoliers upon them to ferry people across. This they do for the fixed fee of five centimes. The *traghetti* are in fact Venetian cab-stands. And, of course, like London cabs, the gondolas may be taken off them for trips. The municipality, however, makes it a condition, under penalty of fine to the *traghetto*, that each station should always be provided with two boats for the service of the ferry. When vacancies occur on the *traghetti*, a gondolier who owns or hires a boat makes application to the municipality, receives a number, and is inscribed as plying at a certain station. He has now entered a sort of guild, which is presided over by a *Capo-traghetto*, elected by the rest for the protection of their interests, the settlement of disputes, and the management of their common funds. In the old acts of Venice this functionary is styled *Gastaldo di traghetto*. The members have to contribute something yearly to the guild. This payment varies upon different stations, according to the greater or less amount of the tax levied by the municipality on the *traghetto*. The highest subscription I have heard of is twenty-five francs; the lowest, seven. There is one *traghetto*, known by the name of *Madonna del Giglio* or *Zobenigo*, which possesses near its *pergola* of vines a nice old brown Venetian picture. Some stranger offered a considerable sum for this. But the guild refused to part with it.

As may be imagined, the *traghetti* vary greatly in the amount and quality of their custom. By far the best are those in the neighbourhood of the hotels upon the Grand Canal. At any one of these a gondolier during the season is sure of picking up some foreigner or other who will pay him handsomely for comparatively light service. A *traghetto* on the *Giudecca*, on the contrary, depends upon Venetian traffic. The work is more monotonous, and the pay is reduced to its tarified minimum. So far as I can gather, an industrious gondolier, with a good boat, belonging to a good *traghetto*, may make as much as ten or fifteen francs in a single day. But this cannot be relied on. They therefore prefer a fixed appointment with a private family, for which they receive by tariff five francs a day, or by arrangement for long periods perhaps four francs a day, with certain perquisites and small advantages. It is great luck to get such an engagement for the winter. The heaviest anxieties which beset a gon-

dolier are then disposed of. Having entered private service, they are not allowed to ply their trade on the *traghetto*, except by stipulation with their masters. Then they may take their place one night out of every six in the rank and file. The gondoliers have two proverbs, which show how desirable it is, while taking a fixed engagement, to keep their hold on the *traghetto*. One is to this effect: *il traghetto è un buon padrone*. The other satirizes the meanness of the poverty-stricken Venetian nobility: *pompa di servitù, misera insegna*. When they combine the *traghetto* with private service, the municipality insists on their retaining the number painted on their gondola; and against this their employers frequently object. It is, therefore, a great point for a gondolier to make such an arrangement with his master as will leave him free to show his number. The reason for this regulation is obvious. Gondoliers are known more by their numbers and their *traghetti* than their names. They tell me that though there are upwards of a thousand registered in Venice, each man of the trade knows the whole confraternity by face and number. Taking all things into consideration, I think four francs a day the whole year round are very good earnings for a gondolier. On this he will marry and rear a family, and put a little money by. A young unmarried man, working at two and a half or three francs a day, is proportionately well-to-do. If he is economical, he ought upon these wages to save enough in two years to buy himself a gondola. A boy from fifteen to nineteen is called a *mezz' uomo*, and gets about one franc a day. A new gondola with all its fittings is worth about a thousand francs. It does not last in good condition more than six or seven years. At the end of that time the hull will fetch eighty francs. A new hull can be had for three hundred francs. The old fittings—brass sea-horses or *cavalli*, steel prow or *ferro*, covered cabin or *felze*, cushions and leather-covered back-board or *stramazetto*, may be transferred to it. When a man wants to start a gondola, he will begin by buying one already half past service—a *gondola da traghetto* or *di mezza età*. This should cost him something over two hundred francs. Little by little, he accumulates the needful fittings; and when his first purchase is worn out, he hopes to set up with a well-appointed equipage. He thus gradually works his way from the rough trade which involves hard work and poor earnings to that more profitable industry which cannot be carried on without a smart boat. The gondola is a source of continual expense for repairs. Its oars have to be replaced. It has to be washed with sponges, blacked, and varnished. Its bottom needs frequent cleaning. Weeds adhere to it in the warm brackish water, growing rapidly through the summer months, and demanding to be scrubbed off once in every four weeks. The gondolier has no place where he can do this for himself. He therefore takes his boat to a wharf, or *squero*, as the place is called. At these *squeri* gondolas are built as well as cleaned. The fee for a thorough setting to rights of the boat is five francs. It must be done upon a fine day. Thus in addition to the cost, the owner loses a good day's work.

These details will serve to give some notion of the sort of people with whom Eustace and I spent our day. The bride's house is in an excellent position on an open canal leading from the Canalozzo to the Giudecca. She had arrived before us, and received her friends in the middle of the room. Each of us in turn kissed her cheek and murmured our congratulations. We found the large living-room of the house arranged with chairs all round the walls, and the company were marshalled in some order of precedence, my friend and I taking place near the bride. On either hand airy bedrooms opened out, and two large doors, wide open, gave a view from where we sat of a good-sized kitchen. This arrangement of the house was not only comfortable, but pretty; for the bright copper pans and pipkins ranged on shelves along the kitchen walls had a very cheerful effect. The walls were whitewashed, but literally covered with all sorts of pictures. A great plaster cast from some antique, an Atys, Adonis, or Paris, looked down from a bracket placed between the windows. There was enough furniture, solid and well kept, in all the rooms. Among the pictures were full-length portraits in oils of two celebrated gondoliers—one in antique costume, the other painted a few years since. The original of the latter soon came and stood before it. He had won regatta prizes; and the flags of four discordant colours were painted round him by the artist, who had evidently cared more to commemorate the triumphs of his sitter and to strike a likeness than to secure the tone of his own picture. This champion turned out a fine fellow—Corradini—with one of the brightest little gondoliers of thirteen for his son.

After the company were seated, lemonade and cakes were handed round amid a hubbub of chattering women. Then followed cups of black coffee and more cakes. Then a glass of Cyprus and more cakes. Then a glass of curaçoa and more cakes. Finally, a glass of noyau and still more cakes. It was only a little after seven in the morning. Yet politeness compelled us to consume these delicacies. I tried to shirk my duty; but this discretion was taken by my hosts for well-bred modesty; and instead of being let off, I had the richest piece of pastry and the largest maccaroon available pressed so kindly on me that, had they been poisoned, I would not have refused to eat them. The conversation grew more and more animated, the women gathering together in their dresses of bright blue and scarlet, the men lighting cigars and puffing out a few quiet words. It struck me as a drawback that these picturesque people had put on Sunday clothes, to look as much like shopkeepers as possible. But they did not all of them succeed. Two handsome women, who handed the cups round—one a brunette, the other a blonde—wore skirts of brilliant blue, with a sort of white jacket and white kerchief folded heavily about their shoulders. The brunette had a great string of coral, the blonde of amber, round her throat. Gold earrings and the long gold chains Venetian women wear, of all patterns and degrees of value, abounded. Nobody appeared without them; but I could not see any of

an antique make. The men seemed to be contented with rings—huge, heavy rings of solid gold, worked with a rough flower pattern. One young fellow had three upon his fingers. This circumstance led me to speculate whether a certain portion at least of this display of jewellery around me had not been borrowed for the occasion.

Eustace and I were treated quite like friends. They called us *I Signori*. But this was only, I think, because our English names are quite unmanageable. The women fluttered about us and kept asking whether we really liked it all, whether we should come to the *pranzo*, whether it was true we danced. It seemed to give them unaffected pleasure to be kind to us; and when we rose to go away, the whole company crowded round, shaking hands and saying: "*Si divertirà bene stasera!*" Nobody resented our presence; what was better, no one put himself out for us. "*Vogliono veder il nostro costume,*" I heard one woman say.

We got home soon after eight, and, as our ancestors would have said, settled our stomachs with a dish of tea. It makes me shudder now to think of the mixed liquids and miscellaneous cakes we had consumed at that unwonted hour.

At half-past three, Eustace and I again prepared ourselves for action. His gondola was in attendance, covered with the *felze*, to take us to the house of the *sposa*. We found the canal crowded with poor people of the quarter—men, women, and children lining the walls along its side, and clustering like bees upon the bridges. The water itself was almost choked with gondolas. Evidently the folk of San Vio thought our wedding procession would be a most exciting pageant. We entered the house, and were again greeted by the bride and bridegroom, who consigned each of us to the control of a fair tyrant. This is the most fitting way of describing our introduction to our partners of the evening; for we were no sooner presented, than the ladies swooped upon us like their prey, placing their shawls upon our left arms, while they seized and clung to what was left available of us for locomotion. There was considerable giggling and tittering throughout the company when Signora Fenzo, the young and comely wife of a gondolier, thus took possession of Eustace, and Signora dell' Acqua, the widow of another gondolier, appropriated me. The affair had been arranged beforehand, and their friends had probably chaffed them with the difficulty of managing two mad Englishmen. However, they proved equal to the occasion, and the difficulties were entirely on our side. Signora Fenzo was a handsome brunette, quiet in her manners, who meant business. I envied Eustace his subjection to such a reasonable being. Signora dell' Acqua, though a widow, was by no means disconsolate; and I soon perceived that it would require all the address and diplomacy I possessed to make anything out of her society. She laughed incessantly; darted in the most diverse directions, dragging me along with her; exhibited me in triumph to her cronies; made eyes at me over a fan; repeated my clumsiest

remarks, as though they gave her indescribable amusement; and all the while jabbered Venetian at express rate, without the slightest regard for my incapacity to follow her vagaries. The *Vecchio* marshalled us in order. First went the *Sposa* and *Comare* with the mothers of bride and bridegroom. Then followed the *Sposo* and the bridesmaid. After them I was made to lead my fair tormentor. As we descended the staircase there arose a hubbub of excitement from the crowd on the canals. The gondolas moved turbidly upon the face of the waters. The bridegroom kept muttering to himself, "How we shall be criticised! They will tell each other who was decently dressed, and who stepped awkwardly into the boats, and what the price of my boots was!" Such exclamations, murmured at intervals, and followed by chest-drawn sighs, expressed a deep preoccupation. With regard to his boots he need have had no anxiety. They were of the shiniest patent leather, much too tight, and without a speck of dust upon them. But his nervousness infected me with a cruel dread. All those eyes were going to watch how we comported ourselves in jumping from the landing-steps into the boat! If this operation, upon a ceremonious occasion, has terrors even for a gondolier, how formidable it ought to be to me! And here is the Signora dell' *Acqua's* white cachemire shawl dangling on one arm, and the Signora herself languishingly clinging to the other; and the gondolas are fretting in a fury of excitement, like corks, upon the churned green water! The moment was terrible. The *Sposa* and her three companions had been safely stowed away beneath their *felze*. The *Sposo* had successfully handed the bridesmaid into the second gondola. I had to perform the same office for my partner. Off she went, like a bird, from the bank. I seized a happy moment, followed, bowed, and found myself to my contentment gracefully ensconced in a corner opposite the widow. Seven more gondolas were packed. The procession moved. We glided down the little channel, broke away into the Grand Canal, crossed it, and dived into a labyrinth from which we finally emerged before our destination, the *Trattoria di San Gallo*. The perils of the landing were soon over; and, with the rest of the guests, my mercurial companion and I slowly ascended a long flight of stairs leading to a vast upper chamber. Here we were to dine.

It had been the gallery of some palazzo [in old days, was above one hundred feet in length, fairly broad, with a roof of wooden rafters and large windows opening on a courtyard garden. I could see the tops of three cypress trees cutting the grey sky upon a level with us. A long table occupied the centre of this room. It had been laid for upwards of forty persons, and we filled it. There was plenty of light from great glass lustres blazing with gas. When the ladies had arranged their dresses, and the gentlemen had exchanged a few polite remarks, we all sat down to dinner—I next my inexorable widow, Eustace beside his calm and comely partner. The first impression was one of disappointment. It looked so like a public dinner of

middle-class people. There was no local character in costume or customs. Men and women sat politely bored, expectant, trifling with their napkins, yawning, muttering nothings about the weather or their neighbours. The frozen commonplaceness of the scene was made for me still more oppressive by Signora dell' Acqua. She was evidently satirical, and could not be happy unless continually laughing at or with somebody. "What a stick the woman will think me!" I kept saying to myself. "How shall I ever invent jokes in this strange land? I cannot even flirt with her in Venetian! And here I have condemned myself—and her too, poor thing—to sit through at least three hours of mortal dullness!" Yet the widow was by no means unattractive. Dressed in black, she had contrived by an artful arrangement of lace and jewellery to give an air of lightness to her costume. She had a pretty little pale face, a *minois chiffonné*, with slightly turned-up nose, large laughing brown eyes, a dazzling set of teeth, and a tempestuously frizzled mop of powdered hair. When I managed to get a side-glance at her quietly, without being giggled at or driven half mad by unintelligible incitements to a jocularity I could not feel, it struck me that, if we once found a common term of communication we should become good friends. But for the moment that *modus vivendi* seemed unattainable. She had not recovered from the first excitement of her capture of me. She was still showing me off and trying to stir me up. The arrival of the soup gave me a momentary relief; and soon the serious business of the afternoon began. I may add that before dinner was over, the Signora dell' Acqua and I were fast friends. I had discovered the way of making jokes, and she had become intelligible. I found her a very nice, though flighty, little woman; and I believe she thought me gifted with the faculty of uttering eccentric epigrams in a grotesque tongue. Some of my remarks were flung about the table, and had the same success as uncouth Lombard carvings have with connoisseurs in *naïvetés* of art. By that time we had come to be *Compare* and *Comare* to each other—the sequel of some clumsy piece of jocularity.

It was a heavy entertainment, copious in quantity, excellent in quality, plainly but well cooked. I remarked there was no fish. The widow replied that everybody present ate fish to satiety at home. They did not join a marriage feast at the San Gallo, and pay their nine francs, for that! It should be observed that each guest paid for his own entertainment. This appears to be the custom. Therefore attendance is complimentary, and the married couple are not at ruinous charges for the banquet. A curious feature in the whole proceeding had its origin in this custom. I noticed that before each cover lay an empty plate, and that my partner began with the first course to heap upon it what she had not eaten. She also took large helpings, and kept advising me to do the same. I said: "No; I only take what I want to eat; if I fill that plate in front of me as you are doing, it will be great waste." This remark elicited shrieks of laughter from all who heard it; and when the hubbub had subsided, I perceived an apparently official personage bearing

down upon Eustace, who was in the same perplexity. It was then circumstantially explained to us that the empty plates were put there in order that we might lay aside what we could not conveniently eat, and take it home with us. At the end of the dinner the widow (whom I must now call my *Comare*) had accumulated two whole chickens, half a turkey, and a large assortment of mixed eatables. I performed my duty and won her regard by placing delicacies at her disposition.

Crudely stated, this proceeding moves disgust. But that is only because one has not thought the matter out. In the performance there was nothing coarse or nasty. These good folk had made a contract at so much a head—so many fowls, so many pounds of beef, etc., to be supplied; and what they had fairly bought, they clearly had a right to. No one, so far as I could notice, tried to take more than his proper share; except, indeed, Eustace and myself. In our first eagerness to conform to custom, we both overshot the mark, and grabbed at disproportionate helpings. The waiters politely observed that we were taking what was meant for two; and as the courses followed in interminable sequence, we soon acquired the tact of what was due to us.

Meanwhile the room grew warm. The gentlemen threw off their coats—a pleasant liberty of which I availed myself, and was immediately more at ease. The ladies divested themselves of their shoes (strange to relate!) and sat in comfort with their stockinged feet upon the *scagliola* pavement. I observed that some cavaliers by special permission were allowed to remove their partners' slippers. This was not my lucky fate. My *comare* had not advanced to that point of intimacy. Healths began to be drunk. The conversation took a lively turn; and women went fluttering round the table, visiting their friends, to sip out of their glass, and ask each other how they were getting on. It was not long before the stiff veneer of *bourgeoisie* which bored me had worn off. The people emerged in their true selves: natural, gentle, sparkling with enjoyment, playful. Playful is, I think, the best word to describe them. They played with infinite grace and innocence, like kittens, from the old men of sixty to the little boys of thirteen. Very little wine was drunk. Each guest had a litre placed before him. Many did not finish theirs; and for very few was it replenished. When at last the dessert arrived, and the bride's comfits had been handed round, they began to sing. It was very pretty to see a party of three or four friends gathering round some popular beauty, and paying her compliments in verse—they grouped behind her chair, she sitting back in it and laughing up to them, and joining in the chorus. The words, "*Brunetta mia simpatica, ti amo sempre più,*" sung after this fashion to Eustace's handsome partner, who puffed delicate whiffs from a Russian cigarette, and smiled her thanks, had a peculiar appropriateness. All the ladies, it may be observed in passing, had by this time lit their cigarettes. The men were smoking Toscani, Sella, or Cavours, and the little boys were dancing round the table breathing smoke from their pert nostrils.

The dinner, in fact, was over. Other relatives of the guests arrived, and then we saw how some of the reserved dishes were to be bestowed. A side table was spread at the end of the gallery, and these late-comers were regaled with plenty by their friends. Meanwhile, the big table at which we had dined was taken to pieces and removed. The *scagliola* floor was swept by the waiters. Musicians came streaming in and took their places. The ladies resumed their shoes. Everyone prepared to dance.

My friend and I were now at liberty to chat with the men. He knew some of them by sight, and claimed acquaintance with others. There was plenty of talk about different boats, gondolas, and sandolos and topos, remarks upon the past season, and inquiries as to chances of engagements in the future. One young fellow told us how he had been drawn for the army, and should be obliged to give up his trade just when he had begun to make it answer. He had got a new gondola, and this would have to be hung up during the years of his service. The warehousing of a boat in these circumstances costs nearly one hundred francs a year, which is a serious tax upon the pockets of a private in the line. Many questions were put in turn to us, but all of the same tenor. "Had we really enjoyed the *pranzo*? Now, really, were we amusing ourselves? And did we think the custom of the wedding *un bel costume*?" We could give an unequivocally hearty response to all these interrogations. The men seemed pleased. Their interest in our enjoyment was unaffected. It is noticeable how often the word *divertimento* is heard upon the lips of the Italians. They have a notion that it is the function in life of the *signori* to amuse themselves.

The ball opened, and now we were much besought by the ladies. I had to deny myself with a whole series of comical excuses. Eustace performed his duty after a stiff English fashion—once with his pretty partner of the *pranzo*, and once again with a fat gondolier. The band played waltzes and polkas, chiefly upon patriotic airs—the *Marcia Reale*, *Garibaldi's Hymn*, &c. Men danced with men, women with women, little boys and girls together. The gallery whirled with a laughing crowd. There was plenty of excitement and enjoyment—not an unseemly or extravagant word or gesture. My *Comare* careered about with a light mænadic impetuosity, which made me regret my inability to accept her pressing invitations. She pursued me into every corner of the room, but when at last I dropped excuses and told her that my real reason for not dancing was that it would hurt my health, she waived her claims at once with an *Ah, poverino!*

Some time after midnight we felt that we had had enough of *divertimento*. Francesco helped us to slip out unobserved. With many silent good wishes we left the innocent, playful people who had been so kind to us. The stars were shining from a watery sky as we passed into the piazza beneath the Campanile and the pinnacles of S. Mark. The Riva was almost empty, and the little waves fretted the boats moored to the *piazzetta*, as a warm moist breeze went fluttering by. We smoked a last

cigar, crossed our *traghetto*, and were soon sound asleep at the end of a long, pleasant day. The ball, we heard next morning, finished about four.

Since that evening I have had plenty of opportunities for seeing my friends the gondoliers, both in their own homes and in my apartment. Several have entertained me at their midday meal of fried fish and amber-coloured polenta. These repasts were always cooked with scrupulous cleanliness, and served upon a table covered with coarse linen. The polenta is turned out upon a wooden platter, and cut with a string called *lassa*. You take a large slice of it on the palm of the left hand, and break it with the fingers of the right. Wholesome red wine of the Paduan district and good white bread were never wanting. The rooms in which we met to eat, looked out on narrow lanes or over pergolas of yellowing vines. Their whitewashed walls were hung with photographs of friends and foreigners, many of them souvenirs from English or American employers. The men, in broad black hats and lilac shirts, sat round the table, girt with the red waist-wrapper, or *fascia*, which marks the ancient faction of the Castellani. The other faction, called Nicolotti, are distinguished by black *assisa*. The quarters of the town are divided unequally and irregularly into these two parties. What formidable rivalry between two sections of the Venetian populace still survives in challenges to trials of strength and skill upon the water. The women, in their many-coloured kerchiefs, stirred polenta at the smoke-blackened chimney, whose huge pent-house roof projects two feet or more across the hearth. When they had served the table they took their seat on low stools, knitted stockings, or drank out of glasses handed across the shoulder to them by their lords. Some of these women were clearly notable housewives, and I have no reason to suppose that they do not take their full share of the house-work. Boys and girls came in and out, and got a portion of the dinner to consume where they thought best. Children went tottering about upon the red-brick floor, the playthings of those hulking fellows, who handled them very gently and spoke kindly in a sort of confidential whisper to their ears. These little ears were mostly pierced for earrings, and the light blue eyes of the urchins peeped maliciously beneath shocks of yellow hair. A dog was often of the party. He ate fish like his masters, and was made to beg for it by sitting up and bowing with his paws. *Voga, Azzò, voga!* The Anzolo who talked thus to his little brown Spitz-dog has the hoarse voice of a Triton, and the movement of an animated sea-wave. Azzò performed his trick, swallowed the fish-bones, and the fiery Anzolo looked round approving.

On all these occasions I have found these gondoliers the same sympathetic, industrious, cheery, affectionate folk. They live in many respects a hard and precarious life. The winter in particular is a time of anxiety and sometimes of privation, even to the well-to-do among them. Work then is scarce, and what there is, is rendered disagreeable to them by the

cold. Yet they take their chance with facile temper, and are not soured by hardships. The amenities of the Venetian sea and air, the healthiness of the lagoons, the cheerful bustle of the poorer quarters, the brilliancy of this southern sunlight, and the beauty which is everywhere apparent, must be reckoned as important factors in the formation of their character. And of that character, as I have said, the final note is playfulness. In spite of difficulties, their life has never been stern enough to sadden them. Bare necessities are marvellously cheap, and the pinch of real bad weather—such frost as locked the lagoons in ice two years ago, or such south-western gales as flooded the basement floors of all the houses on the Zattere—is rare and does not last long. On the other hand, their life has never been so lazy as to reduce them to the savagery of the traditional Neapolitan lazzaroni. They have had to work daily for small earnings, but under favourable conditions, and their labour has been lightened by much good fellowship among themselves, by the amusements of their *feste* and their singing clubs.

Of course it is not easy for a stranger in a very different social position to feel that he has been admitted to their confidence. Italians have an ineradicable habit of making themselves externally agreeable, of bending in all indifferent matters to the whims and wishes of superiors, and of saying what they think Signori like. This habit, while it smoothes the surface of existence, raises up a barrier of compliment and partial insincerity, against which the more downright natures of us northern folk break in vain efforts. Our advances are met with an imperceptible but impermeable resistance by the very people who are bent on making the world pleasant to us. It is the very reverse of that dour opposition which a Lowland Scot or a North English peasant offers to familiarity; but it is hardly less insurmountable. The treatment, again, which Venetians of the lower class have received through centuries from their own nobility, make attempts at fraternisation on the part of gentlemen unintelligible to them. The best way, here and elsewhere, of overcoming these obstacles is to have some bond of work or interest in common—of service on the one side rendered, and goodwill on the other honestly displayed. The men of whom I have been speaking will, I am convinced, not shirk their share of duty or make unreasonable claims upon the generosity of their employers.

J. A. S.

A Bit of Loot.

THE word *loot* has now become naturalised in the English language, and needs no explanation.

I went to Delhi in the month of November 1857, on a visit to a military friend who was then quartered there. It will be remembered that we had re-captured the rebellious city, after a siege of several months, in the month of September. As we had attacked the city from one side only, most of the inhabitants had fled from it before we took it. They had got out as we came in. For a great fear was upon them. We had then expelled almost all that remained behind on military grounds. We had to occupy the whole city, and garrison it with a very small force. The city had been declared confiscated also.

It was most strange to ride through the now silent streets and deserted squares of the great city. You seemed to be going over a modern Pompeii. There did not come over you the strange ghastly feeling of unreality that steals over you in Pompeii. You were not carried into a strange new world of sight and thought and feeling. You were not weighed upon by bye-gone ages, oppressed by Time. Time like space is a most oppressive thought to the human mind. And any of the great monuments of the past, such as Pompeii, which mark off some portion of its boundlessness carry with them some of its weight and mystery. But it was the contrary of these things with the similar silentness and desolation that weighed upon you. Here was all the reality of recent life ; of yesterday, of to-day. But still, somehow, there was here the feeling of a bye-gone age. The city could not have been alive yesterday, that was so silent now. It seemed somehow a thing of the past. The tide of war had not flowed through this retired street. There had been richer quarters to ransack. Everything stood here as it had been left. Here stood the houses, with their furniture, poor, but all the people had ; here were the shops with their little stock of goods still on the counter. But there was no human being in the houses, or in the shops, or in the street. There was no going in and out ; no standing up and sitting down ; no sound of voices. Dead silence reigned over all. If it is impressive in Pompeii to see in the streets the marks of the wheels that rolled a thousand years ago, to find the loaves that were baked but not eaten then, it was also impressive here to find the cooking pot on the fireplace ; the bread in the dish ; the bed laid out to sleep on ; the cart that had been left standing at the door. If in Pompeii it is resurrection, here it was sudden death. If in Pompeii you look on a ghost, here you looked on a dead body from which the warmth of life had hardly fled.

Strangest of all was it to pass through the Chandnee Chouk, the "Moonlight" or "Silver Square," the central market-place, and find it, too, void and silent. For it had been so full of life and sound and movement but a short time before as it is again to-day. For the Chandnee Chouk was and is the Regent Street and Pall Mall combined of Delhi. And Delhi was the great imperial city of the East. More than Granada, more than Cordova, more even than Constantinople, Delhi has been the great city of the Mahomedan conquest. To the followers of the Prophet the fondest and proudest memories hung about it. It was the capital of the greatest empire over which the crescent had shone and held sway. It marked their proudest conquest.

Here the triumphs of the faith had culminated. Here stood the proudest monuments of their art. Here they had erected a great palace-fortification; built lovely chambers and halls; raised the loftiest and most beautiful shrines. To the Mahomedan of India the lines inscribed on the walls of one of those chambers—"If there be a heaven upon earth it is here," applied to the whole city. It was his favourite dwelling-place. It was the seat of government; the centre of trade and commerce and the industrial arts; the seat of learning and religious instruction; of good manners and polite speech; the centre of pleasure. To it came the courtier, the student, the devotee, the trader, and the man of pleasure. Even now, when there is no longer here the court of the Great Mogul, it is the favourite dwelling-place of the Mahomedan nobles, even of the Hindoo princes, of that part of India. You find Mussulman orientalism in full perfection in three cities only—in Damascus, in Cairo, and in Delhi.

But a few months before the Chandnee Chouk at midday had been one of the most bright, gay, glittering, bustling, picturesque places that you could see. The whole place shone and sparkled. In the dresses of the people were to be seen all the colours of the rainbow, as bright as you see them in the sky. Twenty different kinds of robe and head-dress went by you in a few minutes. For here came together people from all parts, not only of India, but of Asia. The shops on either side were filled with glistening goods. The two driving roads on either side of the broad street were thronged with vehicles. Here went by the English-made barouche with its pair of horses, and the canopied "Ruth," looking like a pagoda on wheels, drawn by a tall and lordly pair of bullocks. Here went by the elephants with gaudy housings, whisking their trunks and looking about them with their little eyes. They looked like little mountains which had walked away with the castles on their tops. The men, and even the women, from neighbouring Rajpootana went by on their high-bred camels. The young dandies of the place rode about on their capering, curvetting horses, with coloured legs and tail and plaited mane. The central walk, with its avenue of trees and the canal down its middle, was thronged with people on foot. The place was full of the voices of the people and the cries of the itinerant vendors. "Melons,

sweet melons!"—"Here are roses and sweet jessamine!"—"Cakes fresh and hot!"—"Sugar-cane and water nuts!"—"Whey, sweet whey!" The beggars were calling "Take thought of the poor."—"Remember the needy."—"Feed the hungry in Allah's name." And everywhere was the tinkling of the little brass cups of the water-carriers, and their musical cry of "Water for the thirsty, water!" For no voice is so harsh that it could make the word for water other than musical and sweet sounding.

Most strange was it, then, to ride through this street and find it quite silent, empty, and deserted; with no sound in it but the echoes, far reaching through the void, of the horse's hoofs.

For the first three or four days after the capture of the city, our troops had been allowed the privilege of individual plunder in the city, but not in the palace. They could hardly have been restrained from this, in fact. Being allowed this, they submitted without murmur to the subsequent stoppage; which, in fact, was for their own advantage. For all the contents of the town had been declared confiscated, and the prize of the victorious army. Then came the more systematic gathering together of the spoil. A committee of military officers was appointed to do this, to act as prize agents. Leaving aside the customs of war, this confiscation was not held an undue exercise of the right of conquest even by the people themselves, for they had looked for sack and massacre, and the razing of the city to the ground; not for resistance to a foreign power, but for cruelty and treachery, and the murder of innocent women and children. Being a walled-in city, the gathering together of the valuables in it could be gone on with leisurely, for nothing was allowed in or out of the gates without a pass or scrutiny. By the middle of November, which was the time I went there, what with the first putting in of the hand of the troops, and the subsequent labours of the prize agents, most of the things of any value in the town had been carried away or gathered in the store-rooms of the agents. But to bury money and jewels and precious stones in the ground has always been a custom in the East. A hole in the earth is the favourite bank. And in so large a city, with its labyrinth of streets, its smaller squares inside bigger squares, and courtyards within these, there were many nooks and corners which had not been searched thoroughly, some not even visited. So all search, especially for hidden and buried things, had not been given up. The prize agents gave permission to others besides their own staff of men to search, on condition of the articles found being delivered up to them, they paying a certain percentage on the estimated value. Of course, if a man found a very large pearl or emerald or diamond, whether he put it into his waistcoat pocket, or took it to the prize agents, had to be left to his honour and conscience. But the prize agents gave the permission only to men they thought would bring them. They had taken possession of all the places where there was likely to be any great store of silver and gold and jewels and valuable property; such as the palace of

the king, the houses of the princes and chief noblemen and bankers. And they had reaped the more open fields so closely that they thought they had not left very much for the gleaners.

The friend with whom I was staying had peculiar facilities for the search for hidden treasure. From the nature of his duties and his official position, he could go where he liked, enter any house, dig in any spot, without let or hindrance. I accompanied him one day on one of his rounds. He meant to penetrate into one of the remoter quarters of the town. As we approached it the chill silence became almost oppressive. The dead stillness was not a thing of nought, but had a dreary weight, an actual presence. It hung about you, clung round you. On the populous city had come the loneliness and desolation of the desert. There seemed a strange uselessness about the paved streets and the tall houses and warehouses. In the dwelling-places was no longer heard the sound of the millstones, or seen the light of the candle. It was the cold, still, ghastly face of a corpse: eye-gate, ear-gate, mouth-gate closed. These feelings deepened as we got into the narrower streets, some only ten or twelve feet broad, with the houses rising to great heights on either side, and presenting for long distances only a blank bare surface of wall to the street. The air was dank and chill. The eye saw from one end of the long narrow street to the other as when you look down an empty corridor. The sound of our footsteps made strange echoes down it. The sound of each footfall was sharply repeated; floated away; lived and lasted for long distances; re-echoed in distant squares and courtyards; made a faint current of sound down the corridors by their side, and ruffled the pools of silence in distant chambers. It was a relief to have to make a *détour* through a more open street, where there was some movement, and the signs of the recent conflict took off one's thoughts from the brooding silence. There had been a sharp fight in this street; in some places the sides of the houses were scored with lines like a sheet of music paper, showing the heavy volleys that had been fired down it.

The cats glared at you from the tops of walls like young tigers. They had grown to a monstrous size. They looked to the full as fierce and cruel and bloodthirsty as tigers, for they had been revelling on human flesh.

In these remote parts of the town you encountered to the full as many "well defined and several stinks" as have been credited to the city of Cologne. My friend had become quite learned in distinguishing these.

"Hum!" he said, as we passed one corner, "that is a horse."
"Phew!" he cried, as we turned another, "that is a camel." And, sure enough, after a time we came on the carcasses of the animals he had mentioned.

We once more turned into the quarter into whose depths we meant to penetrate. This single excursion gave me a better idea of the plan of

a native town than I should otherwise ever have obtained. For English people, unless taken by official duties, very rarely go into the native towns by whose sides they live. An Englishman may have been six or seven years at Agra or Allahabad, and never have entered the native town, or have driven only once or twice down the main street.

Security and privacy are the two main objects the native aims at in the location as well as the plan of his house. He does not mind the vicinity of a mass of poor houses; he welcomes a network of narrow winding lanes and streets. Nothing is more striking than the contrast between the wide, open, defenceless English station, with its straw-roofed bungalows, and the close-built native town by its side. The conquerors hold the land in villas, and the conquered dwell in the fenced-in cities. In early ages houses were built primarily for defence, for every man's house had then literally to be his castle. In the East the plan of all houses above the mere hut or shed is the same—that of a square with a courtyard in the centre, access to which is obtained by means of a single doorway or gateway. When the gates are closed the house is a small fort, with the household for garrison. Then again the quarters in which dwell the men of the same caste, trade, or profession, form separate blocks in the town, access to which is obtained through one or two gateways only. Take, for instance, the plan of the Mohulla, or quarter into which we were now making our way. Between two of the main streets of the town, about a quarter of a mile apart, ran a narrow connecting street at right angles to them. On either side of this narrow street lay the Mohulla, with its narrow lanes and internal squares. The only way to enter the quarter was from either end of the central street, and the ingress was guarded at those points by lofty gateways and massive gates. In times of danger those would be the first points guarded by the inhabitants of the quarter. If they were forced, then would come the separate defence of each of the better-class houses. If the owner of one of these was a resolute man, had a large number of well-armed retainers, and had laid in a stock of food enough, he could make a stubborn and lengthy defence. The well in the courtyard would furnish the small garrison with water.

As we penetrated into this quarter the chill, due to the long shut-up houses, the absence of fires, the want of movement, became greater; the silence deepened, and we seemed to have passed away from the outer world, though surrounded by the habitations of men.

It was strange to pass through the wicket of a lofty gateway, and find yourself alone in a silent courtyard surrounded by empty rooms. In one of these the beauty of the buildings, the long arcades with their horse-shoe arches resting on slender pillars of stone, the balconies resting on brackets each one of which was a fine piece of sculpture, and the beautifully pierced panels of stone, showed that it had belonged to some rich Mohamedan nobleman or Hindoo banker.

"There should be something here," said my practical friend. The

upper rooms on that side, with their lace-like marble lattices, signs of jealous privacy, had been the dwelling-place of the women, the Zenana. Those lower rooms had been thronged with servants. But where was now the pleasant bustle of domestic and social life, the coming and going, the cheerful voices, and the light-hearted laughter? War is not a pleasant thing. It is hard that its evils should fall on women and children, and not be confined to the strong men. The humble bedsteads, the earthenware cooking pots of the servants, stood as they had been left. The head-stalls and heel-ropes marked where the horses had stood. The water-pot stood by the side of the well. The solitary palm-tree in a corner of the courtyard looked sad and lonely, and its leaves rustled with a mournful sound. To us the bareness of the rooms did not add to the feeling of desolation as it would have to those who were not acquainted, like ourselves, with the usual want of what we call furnishing in the houses of the natives. Bedsteads, and rough chests in which to keep clothes, often form the only "articles of furniture" in the house of a well-to-do native, unless we bring under that category the clothes and carpets, the cooking pots, and the brass vessels to eat and drink out of.

To one fresh from England, the complete absence of chairs, tables, sofas, bookshelves, sideboards, wardrobes, and all the other articles in an English home, would make the Indian dwelling-place look very empty. I once went to visit a Hindoo Rajah who lived in a castle which his father had held against us for some time. Setting aside his wife's apartments, which he only visited, he lived in one room. This room was carpeted, and one side of it, before some open windows, was occupied by a large wooden dais raised above the ground. This dais was also covered with a handsome carpet, and had on it many large silk-covered pillows and bolsters. This dais was really the old man's dwelling-place. This was his bedroom, dining-room, drawing-room. Here he sat or reclined during the greater part of the day, and here he slept at night; here he took his meals out of the one or two dishes that sufficed to hold them; here he did his work; here he received his friends and visitors; here his bed was spread for him at night. The marks of wealth and position and superior comfort were in the large uncut emeralds that hung in his ears, in the fineness of the muslin that he wore; the richness of the shawls about him, the silver legs that upheld the dais, its rich covering, the silken or brocaded bolsters; in the crowd of retainers who waited without; in all that he ate being raised and cooked by Brahmins; in his eating out of a silver dish, and drinking out of a silver cup. The rich man in India spends his money on the architecture of his house, in rich carpets and bed covers, in valuable shawls, in rich dresses for his wives and children (on the latter he will put solid anklets and armlets of silver and of gold), in horses or fast-trotting bullocks, and in many vehicles; in a host of servants and armed retainers, in great feasts on the occasion of a marriage.

But to return to the courtyard we had entered. It was strange to

find oneself in possession of another man's house, to be able to go where one liked, and do what one liked in it. It was strange to find oneself breaking open another man's strong box, and rifling it of its contents. There is a pleasurable excitement in it; it is a new sensation. The odd thing in battle must be to find yourself authorised to kill anyone you can. It was strange to find oneself an authorised burglar, a permitted thief. Allowing fully the great and noble difference, yet in war time one does go through some of the processes of murder, burglary, and theft.

The quick eye of my friend detected signs of habitation in a small side room in one corner of the courtyard. "There is someone in there," he said.

A flight of steps led up to it. We went up these cautiously. The door at the top of them, leading into the chamber, was partially hidden by a heap of brambles, apparently put there to impede the way. Removing these, he found the door closed. It resisted all his efforts to open it, though it seemed fragile enough.

"There is someone behind it," said my friend; "I hear his breathing." He called loudly through the chinks, and told the man to open the door, and that no harm would be done him. There was no answer to his repeated calls. At last he said—

"Open the door and trust to us; we will not harm you; if you do not, I will bring some soldiers, and they will not spare you."

The door was slowly opened, and an old man peered out at us. The wild, frightened, hungry look in his eyes startled us. His long white hair and long white beard showed that he was a very old man. But the hollow cheeks and hollow stomach, the protruding ribs, the wrinkled skin, were not due to old age alone. His long lean fingers, his fleshless arms and legs, were like those of a skeleton. He was a very tall man, and as he stood on his long lean shanks, his hip-bones stood sharply out, and the bend in his body made the hollow in his stomach still more dreadful. The poor wretch shivered and trembled from weakness, from hunger, and from fear. He looked as if he was at the last extremity of starvation. When at length we got him to tell us his story in trembling accents, it appeared that he had somehow been left behind when the rest of the household had left the place. He was a feeble man, and could not move fast. Afterwards he had been afraid to venture out into the streets by himself. The people had sent all their property and valuables away long before the time of our assault—the old man dwelt very much on this point—and so at the time of the assault they had been able to move rapidly away. They had left the flour they had laid in for ordinary domestic use behind, however, and this he had brought up into this lonely chamber, and cooked himself some cakes once or twice a week, for he was afraid lest the fire should betray him. It had only just sufficed to keep him alive. The constant fear of discovery had been every hour of each day a torment to him, he said. He slept but little at night. He had always been a well-wisher of the British Government.

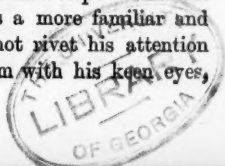
He was now sick unto death, and a poor feeble old man. If he did not get some nourishment soon, he should die. My friend had his orderly with him, and told him to take the old man to his quarters, and get him some food at once. But the old man fell at his feet and clasped his knees, and begged him not to send him with the Sikh sepoy. He was sure he would kill him on the way. Let the merciful Sahibs come with him. There was nothing in that place to search for—nothing. But my friend told him he must go with the orderly, and so he went off, weeping and trembling.

We then went over the house. We broke open one or two chests we found in some of the rooms, but there was nothing in them but quilts and coverlets and the ordinary clothing of the people. I appropriated a rather prettily embroidered skull-cap, and a pair of slippers gaily decked with tinsel. I also found, lying on the floor of one of the rooms, a copy of the poems of Hafiz, very handsomely bound, and of exquisite penmanship, which also I determined to carry away, to convey. In one room was a great heap of brass and copper vessels. These it was not worth our while, of course, to take away; and some of them, those most valuable from the metal in them—were too bulky to be moved.

"I am rather surprised to find so little of any value here," said my friend. "The people who lived here must have been wealthy. I suppose they removed all their valuables early in the siege, as the old man said."

As I have said before, the plan of the buildings was the usual one, that of a hollow square; the courtyard in the middle being a large one. The lower story of the side of the square in which the gateway was—the buildings were two-storied—had a long open corridor, used for stabling the bullocks and horses. The lower story of the opposite side of the square was closed in and used, like the story above it, for a dwelling-place; here being, in fact, the Zenana. The lower stories of the other two sides of the square consisted simply of open arcades with Moorish arches resting on slender pillars. At the end of one of these verandahs, on a rude bedstead, lay the dead body of a Sepoy, still clothed in the full uniform of the East India Company, in which, it may be, the man had fought many a battle for the Company, and now had fought this one against it. He had no doubt been wounded in the fight in the street not far off, and had crept into this quiet place to die. His bayonet lay on the floor by the side of the bedstead.

The gateway leading into the courtyard was not in the middle of that side of the square, but very near one end of it, which also brought it very near the end of one of the adjoining sides. It was, therefore, very near the end of one of these open arcades, the one in which the dead Sepoy lay. The sight of the dead man had kept us in this verandah for some time. To my friend it was a more familiar and accustomed sight than it was to me, and it did not rivet his attention as it did mine. He had been looking about him with his keen eyes,



while I had my gaze fixed on the man who had lain down on the bedstead for a longer and deeper sleep than he had ever experienced in one before.

"Excuse me for a minute," said my friend, as he crossed over to the opposite arcade; and I saw him pacing down it with measured step. When he came back he did the same with the one in which I stood.

"These two verandahs should be the same length," he said to me.

"Yes," I said, "they occupy the two sides of a square. Even in a parallelogram the opposite sides are equal."

"Precisely so; but by the measurements I have just made, this verandah is fifteen feet shorter than the other one. Just wait here a second,"—and he walked to the gateway and then through it into the street. When he came back, he walked up to the end of the arcade next the gateway and examined it closely.

"This end has been walled up," he said; "come and look at the space there is between this inside wall and the wall outside in the street. They would never have a solid wall of that thickness. There would be no object in it here. I am sure that there was an arch like those along the outside of the verandah across this end of it, and that it has been bricked up, and the joining of the wall and arch carefully concealed. It would be at the level of the other ones. If you will give me a back, I will soon find out."

I leaned against the wall as we used to do when we played "Buck! buck! how many fingers do I hold up" at school, and my friend mounted up and began to scrape away the plaster with his pocket-knife.

"Just as I thought," he exclaimed, as he slipped down again. "There is no doubt about it. Do you mind doing a bit of digging?"

"No," I said, "but what are we to dig with?"

"This is provoking!" he cried; "the orderly has taken away the pickaxe with him. If we leave this place for an hour, some one else may discover it; and now that I have scraped the plaster away, the bricking up is easily seen. And if anyone else begins the digging, we cannot interrupt them in it. It would then be their claim, as they call it in the gold fields."

"There is the sepoy's bayonet," I said; "we could dig a hole in a wall with that."

"Of course we could;" and he got it and we set to work. At first the work was slow and difficult. We could do no more than pick out the mortar, which luckily had scarcely set, from the joints between the bricks. But at last we managed to get out a brick. The work became more rapid then. At last the bayonet gave a sudden slip, showing that it had pierced through the wall. And now the hollow sound of the mortar and brickbats falling on the other side of the wall showed that there was a chamber behind it. There must be something worth digging there, and now we went to work with coats off. At the end of an hour's work we had made a good-sized hole. "Will you go in and

see what there is," said my friend, I being slight and slender and he a portly man. I did so; and crawled out again, sick and dizzy from the foul air within. "We must make the hole bigger," said my friend, "and you had better go out into the open air for a few minutes."

When the hole or opening had been made as large as a small casement window, we waited for some time longer to let the foul air come out and the fresh air enter, and then we went in together. There were two or three large and roughly-made chests, or rather cases, for they were evidently made simply to hold their contents, and not secure them. We soon had the covers off these, and found them full of handsome shawls, and scarves, and pieces of silk, and kincob. There were beautiful suits of women's clothes—the full trousers, and the little bodice, and the long flowing sheet to throw over the head—of very fine silk, thickly embroidered with gold and silver. The collection of articles was a very miscellaneous one, for in one chest were several very handsome richly embroidered sword-belts and horse trappings. While we were hard at work we heard a chuckle at the opening in the wall, and looking up saw the glitter of a pair of eyes and the gleam of a long row of teeth. My friend immediately jumped out, with the bayonet in his hand. The inlooker was probably one of our own followers; but in times like those you could not very much trust anyone, and the sight of plunder might lead to our being disposed of, if taken at disadvantage, in such a lonely place. The man turned out to be one of our Sikh soldiers; good fighters but keen plunderers. Love of military employment, a desire to pay off old scores against the sepoys who had helped to break their power and conquer their country, had been the chief reasons that had led to their flocking to our standard at that time: but the hope of loot had been an equally strong one. They had looked forward to the plunder of Delhi, and had not been disappointed in their expectations. It was they, of all the soldiery, who had made the best use of the first few days of permitted plunder. This man was a very fine specimen of the race; tall, lean, lithe, keen-eyed, with a hooked nose and a peaked beard. His eyes glistened as he looked at the hole, and his lips kept parted with a smile or grin. Here was a scene he loved; here was congenial work.

"We must get rid of this fellow," said my friend; "give me out that shawl and that sword-belt."

I handed these out to him, and he gave them to the Sikh. The man's face beamed as he took the sword-belt: it was very handsome, and no doubt valuable, too, from the amount of bullion on it: it was just what he wanted. He made a salute and walked away.

"I was very anxious to get rid of the man," said my companion, as he entered the chamber again, "because I do not think, as he did I could see, that these shawls and things are all that are in here. I am sure that they must have had some valuable things in this house, from the look of it."

So he took one of the silver-covered maces, of which there were several in one corner, and began to sound the floor carefully and systematically. In one corner it sounded hollow. He stooped down and scraped away the mud, and lo! there presented itself to us a large circular stone, with an iron ring at the top. To me—a young lad then—the breaking into the chamber had been exciting enough, a great adventure. Now my excitement rose to fever point. Here was probably the entrance to long underground galleries, such as those which Aladdin got into in the *Arabian Nights*, in which stood the trees on whose branches hung rubies and emeralds, and pearls and diamonds, and great sapphires. Visions rose before me of a house of my own, in England; perhaps a deer-park; horses and hunters, and a moor in Scotland. But when we got the stone up, after some exertion of strength and trouble, it showed no winding staircase leading down to an underground treasure-house.

There was nothing but a small circular pit, about three feet deep, lined and paved with masonry. But in this were several wooden boxes, and small copper boxes with pierced sides and top, in which was a large quantity of jewelry, rolled up in little pieces of cloth, or put away in cotton.

Here were thick bangles of solid gold and solid silver; here were rings for the fingers and rings for the toes; ear-rings and nose-rings; gold and silver chains for the neck; silver chains to wear round the waist; necklaces of many kinds, some to wear close round the neck and some that hung far down on the breast. But alas! even here was disappointment. Very few of the precious stones that had ornamented the jewelry had been left behind. They had been picked out and carried away! Here were heaps of rings tied together in bunches with silk-thread, but all the most valuable stones had been removed from them. It was sad to see the great holes in the solid gold hoops, and think that they had held big emeralds and diamonds which might have been ours. However, we poured all the jewelry into a small silk scarf, and made a bundle of it. We also made a bundle of the best shawls and other articles, and then we departed with our loot.

"We will take these to the prize agents at once," said my friend; "we will then come back with some of their men and take away all the other things."

Just as we were passing out under the gateway my friend exclaimed suddenly—"I see it all! the cunning old fox! He was not forgotten at all. He was left behind on purpose to guard the treasure. They knew that it was not likely that anyone would hurt so old and feeble a man; that hiding himself was all humbug. How well he acted—the cunning old fox! Did you hear what happened in another place like this? I went into it too. There was a grave in the middle of the courtyard, covered with a velvet pall and flowers, and with lights burning at the head—after the usual Mahomedan fashion, you know. A young woman sat by

the side of the grave, weeping and wailing. She was the dead man's wife. We might ransack the house, and take all that was in it, but she begged that she might be left to watch by the grave of her beloved husband until permission could be got to remove his body to the graveyard without the walls. He had died suddenly during the days of the assault, and they had been afraid to carry out the body then, and had laid it in this grave in the courtyard. And the poor young thing wept piteously under her veil. We could not see her face, of course, but from the figure and the voice we knew that she must be a very young girl. She begged to be left there with the venerable old man, an aged retainer, a very counterpart of this other old scoundrel, who had remained behind with her. And she cried as if her heart would break. Of course we said that she might remain; and in fact, being interested in her, said that we would get the permission of the commanding officer for the relations to come and remove the body as soon as they could. They seemed very anxious to do this, for they came the very next day and carried away the beloved one's dust. Then it came out that no one had died or been buried there at all. The whole thing was a ruse. And there at our very feet, in the hole by the side of which the poor widow lay weeping, had been lying hidden a mass of precious stones and valuable jewels, worth thousands of pounds."

We got the whole of our discovered treasure down to the offices of the prize agents. Though we had not made as great a haul as we at one moment expected, yet it was not a bad morning's work; it was not a bad bit of loot.

This story really is a true one, so far as anything that is related can be true.

R. E. F.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LORD CHARLECOTE.



LADY SADDLETHWAITE of course did not expect that the match she planned for the far future would be directly advanced during their continental tour. She would be the last person to credit any girl with such callous inconstancy, Mabel least of all. But she did think, and had every right to think, that a heart so harrowed as hers, like a soil in which every green thing has been torn up by the plough, was in the best state for the sowing of the seed of future love. It could not remain for ever in bare, black and bleak desolation, and the first seed sown now in this cleared, softened, and impressionable soil, would have the best chance of ripening hereafter. Nor, again, did she think it to Lawley's dis-

advantage that he should be associated inseparably with George in the mind of Mabel; with his death as well as with his life. It is true that—

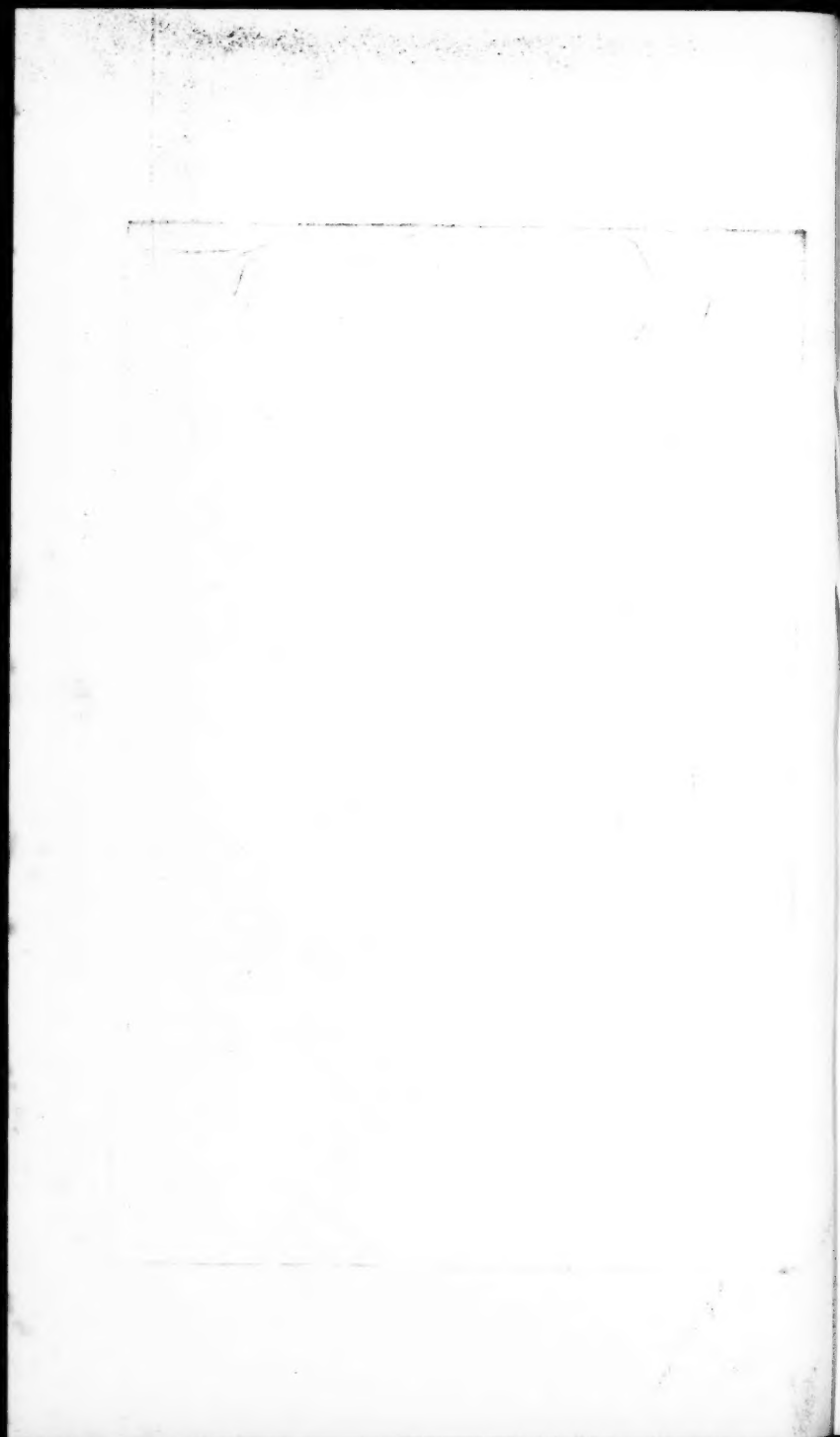
The first bringer of unwelcome news
Hath but a losing office, and his tongue
Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,
Remembered tolling a departed friend—

that is, when this unwelcome news is our sole association with its herald. But when the herald shares the sorrow he announces, and helps by sympathy to heal the wound he makes, his image is more likely to be associated with love than grief.

On the whole, we think Lady Saddlethwaite showed some knowledge of human nature, and of woman's nature, in considering that when



"LORD CHARLECOTE THOUGHT YOU WERE WALKING IN YOUR SLEEP."



Mabel's "heart in the midst of her body was even like melting wax," it was in the fittest state for a fresh impression.

On the other hand, it must be said that neither Mabel nor her love was of an ordinary type. Both her character and bringing up, her reserved nature and her lonely childhood, disposed her to love altogether and intensely where she loved at all. She had so loved George. When he was taken so suddenly and terribly from her, her heart was not merely as a bed from which a plant has been wrenched up by the roots, and which lies torn and tossed and in wild confusion, but as a bed from which, not the plant only, but the soil itself in which it grew, has been taken. She seemed to have no heart left to love with. There was hardly a day in which she did not take herself to task for the ungrateful apathy with which she met Lady Saddlethwaite's kindness and Lawley's devotion. When Lady Saddlethwaite pressed this continental trip upon her, urged it, forced it upon her, she seemed to have the spirit neither to decline nor accept it whole-heartedly. She simply submitted to be petted with the listless languor of a spoiled child in the first stage of convalescence. But this ungracious apathy was most unnatural to her, and at times she woke from it overpowered with self-reproach, and would pain Lady Saddlethwaite by the depth of her penitence. For Lady Saddlethwaite understood her, and loved and admired her more in her bereavement than ever. No vain beauty could delight more in the reflection of her loveliness in the glass than Lady Saddlethwaite delighted to see her kindness reflected in smiles from every face about her; but she made allowance for the glass in Mabel's case being dimmed with tears, and set herself to do all she could to bring back something of its old brightness.

As for Lawley, he looked for no acknowledgment. He was content to be allowed to devote himself to her without hope or thought of a return—at least in these first days of her trouble. She had, as it were, taken the veil of sorrow, and her vestal dedication to it was to be respected. So Lawley fancied his feeling towards her was best expressed in lines of his favourite Shelley he was ever repeating to himself—

The worship the heart lifts above,
And the heavens reject not;
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow;
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

But, in truth, he was wildly, passionately, hopelessly in love, and little likely to be reconciled for long to this cold comfort—

In her bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in her sphere.

For the present, however, in the first few months of her sorrow, it was the utmost he did or could look for. As for Mabel, she soon fell into the way of looking to him and relying on him always and for everything, except conversing with the natives. Lawley either couldn't or wouldn't

speak French. He acknowledged to being able to read it, but speak it he wouldn't. Lady Saddlethwaite couldn't. Mabel, therefore, had a chance of turning Miss Murdoch's lessons to advantage.

"But I only know words with a 'U' in them," said Mabel, with a flash of her old fun, as they stepped off the steamer at Calais. "My aunt, who taught me, discovered that the great secret of the French language was the pronunciation of the vowel 'U'; so she picked out of the dictionary all the words with a 'U' in them, and made me string them together in sentences. 'U,' she said, was everything in French."

"In England 'I' is the all-important vowel, which accounts for the difference in the manners of the two countries," said Lawley.

"I hope there's a 'U' in soda-water," said Lady Saddlethwaite, who, though the sea had been as glass, felt slightly qualmish.

"Oh, here they all speak English—of a sort. I think they must have been taught it by their aunts, for they only know words with a 'V' in them. 'Vee vill 'ave soda-vater' will fetch them."

"Not from their aunts. Their aunts would not have taught them such a Cockney pronunciation, Mr. Lawley."

"Then they must have learned it from the exclamation on landing of the qualmish passengers, 'O de V!'"

This certainly was a wild joke, but Lawley was in wild spirits at finding that the bustle and strangeness and excitement were rousing Mabel out of her listlessness. It was, indeed, for this reason he insisted on her being interpreter, as it was something for her to do, and for them to laugh at. Not that her French was bad—it was singularly, though rather pedantically, good. Nor that her accent was detestable—as, though it truly was, they didn't know it—but that she *would* speak every syllable with staccato distinctness, as if she were shouting through an ear-trumpet.

This joke, mild as it was, was a joy for ever, as Mabel was almost incorrigible through her childish association of French with deaf Miss Murdoch; while there was, of course, besides, the natural tendency to shout to a foreigner through confounding unconsciously dulness of intelligence with dulness of hearing.

During their tour nothing so pleased Lady Saddlethwaite—not cities, scenery, statues, paintings—so much as the sensation Mabel created wherever she appeared. In Weyton and its neighbourhood Mabel was admired, but not enthusiastically admired; not so much admired as Miss Smithers, who might have won a prize at a cattle-show. The taste of the people in beauty, like their taste in everything else, was coarse. They liked it as they liked their wine, "full bodied." But in Rome, the foster-mother of the art of the world, Mabel distracted the attention of the artists in the Pinacotheca of the Vatican, and in the galleries of the Pamfili-Doria palace and of the Capitol. It was not so much the beauty of her face which attracted them, as its expression, madonna-like in its sad sweetness, and in its utter lack of self-consciousness.

Mabel was never given to self-consciousness, and her sorrow had taken her out of herself more than ever, and she walked through the galleries as unconscious of admiration as the pictures and statues themselves.

Lady Saddlethwaite cared very little for pictures and statues, and yet she endured them for the pure pleasure of watching the admiration Mabel excited. All eyes seemed to follow her as sunflowers the sun. Lady Saddlethwaite felt something of the pride and pleasure of a virtuoso who exhumes a gem by an old master from the rubbish of a garret, and exhibits his discovery to appreciative connoisseurs. She was especially pleased when these connoisseurs happened to be English (for foreigners are but foreigners at best), most of all when they were unexceptionable English of her own sacred set. For no grocer or college don could have a more superstitious veneration for blue blood than some in whose veins it flows. As for Lady Saddlethwaite, she believed in the immaculate conception of the well-born, and in the papal infallibility of their opinions on social subjects—when they agreed with her. Lord Charlecote, for instance, whom she chanced upon in a corridor of the Vatican—a young gentleman much given to the turf, who canted cynicism in opposition to his companion Clifford's cant of sentiment—was consecrated as an oracle because of his enthusiastic admiration of Mabel.

"Lady Saddlethwaite! You here? Everyone's here, I think," with a slight querulousness. "But, I say, who's that girl that goes walking in her sleep—do you know? There, looking at that old saint with a crick in his neck, with the grey thingamyjig on."

"You'd better mind what you say of her, my lord; she's in my charge."

"Is she, though?" with a new interest in Lady Saddlethwaite.

"No harm in saying she's the loveliest girl in Rome, bar none, eh? Who is she?"

"She's a Miss Masters. Shall I wake her and introduce you?"

"If you would. But, I say, Lady Saddlethwaite, can she talk? I can't make the running with these things, you know," pointing to the pictures. "Does she hunt, or that?"

"Oh, she can talk on any subject when she's awake. Mabel!"

Lady Saddlethwaite was as proud of Mabel's conversational powers as of her beauty, and seized every opportunity to show them off. Mabel came at call, and was introduced to Lord Charlecote.

"Lord Charlecote thought you were walking in your sleep, Mabel, and wished me to wake you before you fell downstairs," said Lady Saddlethwaite mischievously, and not in the best taste; but she wished to rouse Mabel, that she might show to advantage in the eyes of a person of Lord Charlecote's exquisite discrimination.

"Oh, I say, you know, Lady Saddlethwaite, I meant that Miss Masters was like *La Sonambula*," said his lordship, with great presence of mind. "Patti, you know."

"But it *is* like a dream to me being here," said Mabel.

"Like a nightmare, by George; there's no end to it. I thought I was through, but there's all this yet," looking ruefully at his catalogue.

"I think, if I were you, my lord, I should go by Murray. He skips most of it," said Mabel.

"Happy thought! This beastly thing skips nothing. It expects you to do the ceilings, even," with a bitter remembrance of the Sistine Chapel.

"Lady Saddlethwaite has a Murray with two leaves missed out in the binding. It has been a great comfort to her," said Mabel, with perfect truth.

"I'll borrow it, by George!"

"But I'm afraid those are the leaves you have done if you've got to here."

Lord Charlecote groaned. Dare we to confess that our heroine to some extent sympathised with him? She could appreciate about one-tenth of all the wonders she had shown her, but her appreciation even of it was blunted by the weariness of having gone through the other nine-tenths.

"I have a lot of old masters and that sort of thing at home, and the public are admitted to do them on certain days; but when I get back I'll put a stop to it. I never thought it was like this," said Lord Charlecote, remorsefully. It was the remorse of Lear exposed to the pelting of the pitiless storm, and so reminded of the houseless heads of the poor—

O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel.

Mabel laughed at this instance of sympathy learned through suffering, and turned to tell it to Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley, who were walking behind them.

"Let us give it up for to-day," cried Lady Saddlethwaite eagerly.

"For ever and a day—unless *you* are coming again," said Lord Charlecote, speaking to Lady Saddlethwaite, but looking at Mabel.

Mabel was looking at Lawley, to whom she had already confessed her Philistinism, but of whose judgment she stood in awe. Alas for Lawley! he had no judgment in her presence, no thought, no taste, no eyes, no admiration but for her only—only her. The fierce fire of love consumed him utterly, burning now with the green flame of jealousy. Lord Charlecote's admiration was clear, and that he should win even a laugh from Mabel was bitter. It is natural that "love strong as death" should be joined in the same verse with "jealousy cruel as the grave."

"Let's go to the circus."

"The what?"

"The Coliseum," replied his lordship unabashed. "It's the best value in the place. Clifford tells me there used to be races there, but I can't for the life of me see how they managed it. It's a grand stand anyhow."

Accordingly it was agreed that they should drive to the Coliseum, for his lordship to look a little more into this mystery.

"It's a mouldy old place, isn't it?" he said to Mabel as they drove through Rome. "It always reminds me of an old cemetery; all chapels, statues, monuments, broken pillars half buried in clay. It gives me the shivers, by George! I'd have gone a week ago but for Clifford. He hasn't my feeling about it at all. I tell him he's no imagination."

Mabel was quick enough to gather from his manner that Mr. Clifford was, or fancied himself, a very imaginative person, who probably took his friend's facetious irony seriously and ill.

"Rome is a dangerous place for anyone with a quick imagination. It runs away with one so soon."

"To Naples? that's where mine would have taken me. Glad it didn't though, or I should have missed you, Lady Saddlethwaite."

His lordship's compliment was, of course, meant for Mabel, whom, because she understood his wit, he began to think witty. A little wit goes a long way from the lips of either rank or beauty, probably for the reason mentioned by Barrow in his definition of wit: "It procureth delight as monsters do, not for their beauty, but for their rarity." Mabel, though she indulged sometimes in the luxury of silence and sorrow in Lawley's or Lady Saddlethwaite's company, always exerted herself when with strangers; and to-day the whole burden of entertaining Lord Charlecote seemed to fall upon her. Lawley was gloomily silent, while Lady Saddlethwaite was tired and half asleep.

"Here's the circus!" Mabel exclaimed, as they drew near the Coliseum. "Your imagination doesn't always take a gloomy flight, my lord. Girls on piebald horses leaping through hoops is a cheerful exchange for the dying gladiator and the Christian martyrs," said Mabel with a smile, to show she saw through his affectation of Philistinism.

"Why, what-you-call-him, Byron, calls it a circus, doesn't he?"

Such was the bloody circus' genial laws.

But the gladiator's bloody circus stands

A noble wreck in ruinous perfection.

Not but that you may be quite right, you know, Miss Masters," he hastened to say with a face of perfect seriousness. "Dare say Byron was thinking of girls in spangles on piebald horses leaping through hoops when he called it a circus."

Certainly Mabel had caught a Tartar in this sleepy-looking young nobleman.

"When he called it a *gladiator's* circus he was probably thinking of gladiators, not of a grand stand," said Mabel archly.

"Well, but it *is* a grand stand for looking down at the race of ideas, religions, empires, &c. Will that do?"

Lord Charlecote was amazed to meet a beauty with brains, who was neither *gauche* nor *blasée*, and could say something besides "Yes,"

"No," "awfully," "nice," "tiresome." He paid her the compliment, as they walked together within the Coliseum, in front of Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley, of unmasking the really strong, if not deep, feeling that underlay his assumed cynicism.

In truth, his lordship was a most poetic and impressionable person, and "protested too much" through his assumption of cynicism. Mabel also became confidential, and confessed to her imagination being overpowered and oppressed by all that was suggested to her, and to her feeling, as she had often felt in trying to master the full meaning of a grand poem or piece of music, wearied and confused.

"You've been doing too much. It's a fit of mental dyspepsia. No mind could digest all that you've been trying to digest in a week. You should have taken a month to it."

"But I hadn't a month to take."

"What on earth have you to do? I never knew a young lady have anything to do."

"You never knew a young lady who was a national schoolmistress, then, my lord."

"A national—— What in the name of fortune made you take up that craze?"

"Necessity. I couldn't help myself."

He was silent for a second or two from sheer surprise, but soon recovering himself, he showed the truest tact in continuing, instead of turning, the conversation.

"Don't you find it very dreary, Miss Masters?"

"Oh, I find everything dreary sometimes," with a dreary sigh, "even the old masters," pulling her wandering thoughts together again with a smile.

Lord Charlecote, as we have said, was a most poetic and impressionable person, and had his original admiration for Mabel immensely increased by this discovery of her fallen fortunes. That the fall had been extraordinary he had no doubt at all, as Mabel had the bearing of a princess. When he had returned with them to their hotel, he found an opportunity to rave about her to Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Well, do you know what she is, my lord?"

"She told me—she wasn't bragging of it, you know. It came out casually."

"Bragging of it!"

"Any other girl would either hide it or brag of it."

"I think I'd better warn you that there's no use falling in love with her, my lord."

"Engaged to the parson?"

"No, but she was engaged to another of the cloth, who was murdered in Australia."

"Murdered! That was the sleep-walking look. Poor girl! she's had it hard."

"Yes, she has had it hard, and yet she's of good family." Perplex-

ing paradox to Lady Saddlethwaite. "At least her father has good blood in his veins. He's a Colonel Masters, and lost all in that Caledonian Bank. The shock struck him down with paralysis, and she had to take to teaching to support herself and him. Then came this other trouble, poor child!"

"She might get over it in time," said his lordship, with a meaning Lady Saddleworth read and answered.

"My dear Lord Charlecote, by the time she has got over it you will have been in and out of love with twenty others."

Lord Charlecote laughed. It was a true bill. He was as impressionable and as unstable as water, and was in and out of love once a month on an average.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LOVE STRONG AS DEATH.

LORD CHARLECOTE was devoted in his attentions to Mabel, not only for the few remaining days of her stay in Rome, but also throughout her tour. He deserted his friend Clifford, the warmth of whose æsthetic enthusiasm had soured him to cynicism, and had become at last too oppressive, and begged Lady Saddlethwaite's permission to join her party. Lady Saddlethwaite could not, of course, have done otherwise than have conceded the permission, even if the concession had been distasteful. But it was not distasteful. Lord Charlecote was a personage of very considerable importance in her mind and world, and his admiration of Mabel was admiration of Lady Saddlethwaite's taste. As for Lawley's chagrin at the arrangement, it, too, was a good thing. Love, like light, was doubled by reflection, and Lawley's worship, like all worship, would be quickened by being shared. It was shared. Lord Charlecote fell, as far as he could fall, in love with Mabel. He did not mean to do so, of course, at first, but "in the matter of love," says the Spanish proverb, "you begin when you like and leave off when you can." It was not, to tell the truth, a very brilliant conquest of Mabel's. In the first place, his lordship was always in love with some one or other; in the second place he felt safe with Mabel for the ignoble reason that Lady Saddlethwaite had guaranteed her to be love-proof, and there was therefore no fear of a serious entanglement; and in the third place his love, such as it was, was due less to Mabel's being lovely and lovable than to this very fact, that she was love-proof. For we may say that what is true generally of all the children of men, is universally true of all spoiled children—upgrown or other—a thing needs but to be beyond their reach to be longed for. Lord Charlecote had been a spoiled child from his birth, and had learned what it was to be happy in everything but happiness—

Happy thou art not;

For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,
And what thou hast, forget'st.

And this he found true specially in affairs of love. Here, too, he was a spoiled child, and had grown from being petted to being as pettish as the sex he pursued—

Ubi velis nolunt; ubi nolis volunt ultro;
Concessâ pudet ire viâ—

as Lucan has it; or, as it is put prettily in French, "*Une femme est comme votre ombre, courez après, elle vous fuit, fuyez-la, elle court après vous.*" His lordship's success with the sex had made him wayward as they in this, and Mabel's absolute indifference to him became her chief charm in his eyes. Her conquest, then, was not very brilliant.

May we say here, that if we seem to make all men fall in love with our heroine, it is because we have to do only with those who did fall in love with her. There were a vast number of golden youth in Wefton and its neighbourhood who saw nothing in her; but just for that reason we have not to do with them. "See," said some one to Diogenes, pointing in Neptune's temple to the pictures of those who had escaped shipwreck; "see the wonderful power of the god!" "But where are they painted who were drowned?" asked the cynic. So we paint only those who attest the power of our goddess; the multitude who did not attest her power are for that reason unrepresented. What really needs explanation is the fiveness of her suitors, and this is explicable only by her living all her life in Wefton. As a rule, indeed, we believe that girls have more choice of suitors than we men imagine. We know of those who have proposed and been accepted, but of those who have proposed and been refused we never hear, and so we get to speak, and perhaps think, as if most girls took, or would take, the first man that offered. It is only fair to us to say, however, that for this vulgarity of thought and speech match-makers and women generally are chiefly responsible. "Why don't you marry so and so?" they'll say, speaking to the meanest of our sex of the fairest of theirs. And, indeed, women owe it all to their own valuation of themselves that men think less of them than they deserve. A misogynist might say of them what Johnson said of the Irish. "The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen. No, sir, the Irish are a *fair* people,—they never speak well of one another."

Mabel then, as we said, won Lord Charlecote's facile and fickle affections, but won them quite unconsciously. She was in no mood to be on the look-out for such a conquest; while besides, Lady Saddlethwaite had more than once alluded casually to his lordship's multitudinous attachments. Mabel, therefore, took his devotion as due, in part, to his gallantry, but in chief to his compassion; because the deference of his manner had evidently deepened since he came to know of her position in life. She felt very grateful to him on this account, and exerted herself to entertain him—an exertion which did herself as much good as the excitement of ever changing scenes—for she was thereby roused out of herself, and

could not indulge in those long lapses of silence and sorrow she sometimes gave way to when with Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley.

"What shall we do to-day?" asked Lord Charlecote on the second morning after their arrival in Genoa.

"Oh, nothing," sighed Lady Saddlethwaite wearily; "it's the only thing we haven't done, except the Palazzo Doria."

"And it should be done as being a great Italian work of art, *dolce fur niente*," said Mabel.

"Let's do it on the sea, then," said Lord Charlecote. "There's no seeing Genoa in Genoa. One cannot see the wood for the trees, the streets are so narrow."

Lady Saddlethwaite felt qualmish at the mere mention of the sea. "The very sight of the sea makes me dizzy," she said.

"Why, it's like glass."

"It's like Genoa—looks best in the distance," with a shake of the head. "But you'll all go. I shall be glad to be rid of you to get an hour or two's rest."

"I shall stay with you, Lady Saddlethwaite, if you'll allow me."

"You shall do no such thing, child. I'm going to bed. If that's the only way to see the place, you must see it in that way. I can't pay the price. It isn't 'see Genoa and die,' you know, and I'm not called to martyr myself."

Lady Saddlethwaite's old-fashioned notion of the propriety of chaperoning Mabel always and everywhere got worn out as she got worn out herself; and, indeed, even a more particular chaperone would have felt there was something almost ludicrous in safeguarding such a girl as Mabel.

Mabel went to get ready, and soon returned looking her loveliest, as Lady Saddlethwaite thought, and as Lord Charlecote thought, and as, most of all, Lawley thought, and the three set out together for the port. They chartered a boat—not over clean, but the cleanest procurable—provided with a pair of oars and a light sail which they could rig up if there was a breath of wind outside the harbour. But there wasn't; so they pulled and rested at intervals, chatting the while. There are few more superb views than that of Genoa from the sea, as even Lord Charlecote—who still affected cynicism in general conversation—was forced to admit.

"But the place looks in pawn while you're in it," he said, "with such frowsy tenants in its palaces—like jewels in the hands of a Jew pawnbroker."

"They may be redeemed one day," said Lawley dreamily.

"Not they," said Lord Charlecote decidedly; "commerce, like the sea it sails on, floods one coast and leaves another high and dry."

"Everything goes," said Mabel, with a sadness born of her own trouble.

"*Ça ira!* It's the tune time marches to," said Lord Charlecote, hum-

ming it. "It's a provision of nature for Englishmen; for you see, if there were no ruins there would be no picturesqueness, and if there were no picturesqueness there would be no Cook's personally-conducted tours."

"I wonder why ruin makes everything picturesque," said Mabel.

"Its associations with death, I think," said Lawley. "The shadow of death, like night, makes the most commonplace thing impressive. Every ruin is a shadow of the coming event, and it's the presentiment that unconsciously fascinates us."

This was rather a dreary topic, and Lord Charlecote changed it. "I don't think it was ever much of a place to live in, or that they were ever much of a people," he said cynically, referring to Genoa la Superba. "The view you get from history is like the view you get from here—a distant view. You see only what was splendid, as we see from here only palaces and churches. What was sordid and narrow and frowzy is out of sight. They were a commercial people," he added contemptuously, "and commerce is always mean. It's the dry rot of a nation. 'Honour sinks where commerce long prevails.'"

"Isn't it Bacon who says that in the infancy of states arms flourish, in their middle age arts, and in their declining years commerce? Under its other name of avarice, it is the usual characteristic of old age.

That meanest rage

And latest folly of man's sinking age,
Which rarely venturing in the van of life,
While nobler passions wage their heated strife,
Comes skulking last, with selfishness and fear,
And dies, collecting lumber in the rear.

Both gentlemen were thinking of another people than the Genoese, Lawley with good reason, having lived so long in the West Riding. It was rather a stiff conversation for a sultry day, when any kind of effort, physical or mental, was exhausting, but they drifted into the subject, and were stimulated by the presence of Mabel to talk their best upon it. They sang as the thrushes sing in spring—in rivalry. The languor of the day, however, had the effect of making their talk discursive. It passed from Genoa and its siege in 1799, when 20,000 of its inhabitants perished by famine, on to deaths of different kinds, and to that by drowning as the easiest. Lord Charlecote quoted a great London doctor, who told him of two men he had attended at different times in hospital, both of whom had been all but drowned, while both, upon their recovery, described their latest sensations before absolute unconsciousness as delicious. Lawley, by a double association, was reminded of his favourite Shelley, drowned in this sea, and quoted one of the stanzas, 'Written in dejection near Naples':—

Yet now despair itself is mild,

Even as the winds and waters are;

I could lie down like a tired child,

And weep away the life of care

Which I have borne, and yet must bear,

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
 And I might feel in the warm air
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Mabel, looking down through the still clear water at

The deep's untrampled floor,
 With green and purple seaweeds strown,

felt that the lines Lawley quoted exquisitely expressed her own deepest longing. Suddenly the glass through which she looked became dim and broken. A breeze had sprung up and ruffled the still surface.

"A breeze at last!" cried Lord Charlecote; "let us hoist the sail."

While they stepped the mast, the boat swung round broadside to the rising waves, which though not very formidable, tossed the cockleshell of a craft up and down like a shuttlecock. The mast being fixed, Lord Charlecote stood on the seat for a moment to secure the tackle of the sail above; Lawley, standing also, unfurled it below. While the crazy little craft was thus top-heavy, with the weight so much to leeward as to bring her gunwale level with the water, a sudden gust and a strong wave sent her over. She went down like lead. Such was the intensity of Lawley's love that his first thought, when he could think, was of Mabel. As he struggled up to the surface, it was of her life he was thinking, not of his own. They rose almost together; he swam towards her and caught her just as she was about to sink the second time. She clutched his coat convulsively, but he slipped out of it, left it in her hands, and swam shorewards, pushing her before him. He was a strong swimmer, but it was a long swim. He had not struggled through half the distance before his strength began to give out. Mabel, who had now recovered consciousness, and comparative calmness, felt it was giving out.

"Let me go!" she cried, trying to disengage herself.

Lawley silently held firm, with an effort that cost him much of his fast-going strength.

"You could have saved yourself. It is too late now!" she cried again despairingly.

Yes, it was too late now. Even if Lawley had let her go, he could not have struggled on very much further.

"Mabel!" he gasped, "I love you—one kiss!"

Even at that awful moment the revelation came with a kind of shock to her. She turned her face to his; their lips met, ere they sank together with a cry to the mercy of God.

CHAPTER XL.

CHANGED RELATIONS.

THE wave that helped to swamp the boat was itself helped by the swell of a large steamer, which was much nearer Lawley, if he had known it, than the shore. But he did not know it. Mabel rose between him

and the shore, and he swam towards her with the steamer behind him. Lord Charlecote, however, rose with his face to the steamer, and made for it with no thought at the moment of anyone but himself. He had been taught all his life to think only of himself, and it was not to be expected that he should forget the lesson when life itself was at stake. He, too, was a good swimmer, even better than Lawley, had only himself to save, and only a short distance to cover, since a boat from the steamer put out to meet him. Safe in the boat he had thought to spare to Mabel and Lawley. He directed the men to pull towards where the boat went down, while he himself looked anxiously in all directions for any appearance of his companions. At last he saw them together making for the shore. He felt a twinge of shame, remorse, and jealousy at the sight of Mabel being saved by his rival. He pointed to where they were, pulled out his purse, poured a heap of sovereigns into his hand, and by these signs stimulated the men (who spoke only Italian, of which he did not know a word) to the utmost exertions. While, however, they were still a good way off, Mabel and Lawley disappeared. Lord Charlecote shouted, pointed, urged the men by excited gestures till they pulled as if their own lives were in the balance. As they shot over the spot where the two had disappeared, Mabel and Lawley, still clinging together, rose for the second time to the surface, and before they could sink again Lord Charlecote had leaped out, swam to them, and supported them until the boat put back and took them in. Mabel was still alive, but Lawley was to all appearance dead.

The boat then made for the harbour, to which the steamer had already preceded them. It was the nearest refuge where they were sure to find a doctor. Lord Charlecote's assumed impassiveness was submerged beneath a wave of impulsive feeling. He felt Mabel's faint pulse, chafed her hands, rose and sat down again a dozen times in extreme excitement, gesticulating unintelligible directions to the men, and bending forward over the bulwarks as if that would hasten by a handbreadth her speed. At last they rounded the harbour pier, and passed ship after ship, whose crews looked down over the bulwarks on their ghastly burden. They hailed each as they passed, asking if there were a doctor on board? No. Lord Charlecote, in a frenzy of passionate impatience at each vain stoppage, was trying to intimate to the men that they must go straight to shore without slackening to ask again this hopeless question, when a small boat with an Englishman in it, making for the harbour mouth, pulled up alongside.

"You ask for a doctor?" asked the Englishman in execrable Italian.

"Are you a doctor?" asked Lord Charlecote simultaneously.

The stranger made the sole reply of stepping into the boat and altering at once the posture of the two bodies, which he saw only when he came alongside. He then gave directions to both the men in his own boat and to those with Lord Charlecote, and turned again to examine the lifeless bodies.

"She's not dead?" cried Lord Charlecote eagerly.

"No, she's not dead," replied the doctor after an intolerably deliberate delay; "she'll be all right in a few days, I should say."

"And he?"

The doctor took some time before he answered by shaking his head. "How long has he been under water?"

"Not five minutes."

"Five minutes!"

"But he had a long swim first, holding her up."

"He must have been nearly dead before he sank." Which indeed was true, as Lawley had a spirit much stronger than his strength.

"He's dead then?"

The doctor again proceeded to examine Lawley carefully and exhaustively, trying the while to stimulate artificial respiration, but was interrupted by the boat's touching the landing place. The doctor's boat, being much the lighter and swifter, had beaten them by time enough to have a conveyance in waiting, and in a few minutes he and his patients and Lord Charlecote were in the nearest hotel. Lord Charlecote waited to be assured that Mabel was restored and out of danger, before he hurried off to be the first to tell Lady Saddlethwaite of the accident.

When he appeared before her, drenched and dripping, alone and with trouble in his face, Lady Saddlethwaite realised her love for Mabel.

"Where's—where's Mabel?" she asked in a tone of great agitation.

"She's all right, thank God. We had an upset, but we were picked up, and she has been some time coming to. The doctor says she'll be all right in a day or so."

"But where is she?" still anxiously.

"She's at some hotel near the harbour. I forgot to ask its name; but I've kept the cab."

"I shall not be a minute," said Lady Saddlethwaite, hurrying towards the door, but pausing as she reached it to turn and ask, "And Mr. Lawley?"

Lord Charlecote shook his head.

"Drowned!"

"The doctor says there's no hope, but he's doing all he can to restore him."

Lady Saddlethwaite stood transfixed at the door.

"He has lost his life—if he has lost it—in trying to save Miss Masters," continued Lord Charlecote, finding a relief in giving expression to his self-reproach. "I took care of myself, but he held her up to his last breath. The doctor says he must have been all but dead before they sank."

Lady Saddlethwaite was much moved. "Is there no hope?"

Lord Charlecote again shook his head. Lady Saddlethwaite hurried off to get ready, and having given some confusing instructions to Parker about following her—where and with what she did not say—she entered

the cab—without waiting for Lord Charlecote, who had to change his soaking clothes—and was soon by Mabel's bedside.

Mabel was restored and conscious, but weak and confused. She recognised Lady Saddlethwaite, who stooped to kiss her with a mother's tenderness, and smiled faintly in acknowledgment of the caress.

"Where's George?" she asked in a voice barely audible. George and Lawley had got confused together in her drowning delirium, and she had not yet come to distinguish them.

"Who, dear?"

Mabel felt she had used the wrong name, but could not think of the right one. She lay silent for a little, trying to collect and concentrate her scattered thoughts.

"You mustn't trouble yourself about anything but getting better, dear. Try to go asleep."

"He's drowned!" with a kind of terror in her wide and wistful eyes.

"He's nothing of the sort. You're only dreaming, and you had much better dream asleep. There, be a good child and go asleep when you're told," patting her pale cheek.

Mabel smiled again faintly and closed her eyes.

Lady Saddlethwaite could say with a safe conscience that Lawley wasn't drowned, but it was all she could say, or the doctor either. The flame of life flickered faintly in his breast, but there was no fuel for it to feed on, and it threatened every moment to go out altogether. In fact Lawley was like to die of exhaustion. He found, however, what he needed most in Dr. Pardoe, not a very brilliant, but an extremely painstaking physician, who not only doctored but nursed him. He was very much interested, not in the man but in the patient; and death, when he seemed to have it all his own way, found he had the battle to fight all over again with a plucky and tough antagonist. Dr. Pardoe had that blind and dogged English courage of which the French prince in *Henry V.* complained—"If the English had any apprehension, they would run away." He would, perhaps, have despaired if he had seen clearly the desperation of the case. But he didn't, and he fought death to the death with stolid and stubborn hardihood. It was a long and doubtful battle. When Mabel was quite well, as she was in a few days, Lawley lay still in the shadow of death—in a twilight, whether of life's dawn or setting no one could say. Mabel, if she could, would freely have given her life for his. It was all she had to give, for her love was buried in George's grave. The girl was utterly miserable. If Lawley died, his death was at her door; if he lived, at her door, too, would be his unhappiness. For she knew enough of him to feel that his love would be life-long and life-absorbing. Here was the greatest of all the debts she owed him—his love—greater even than the debt of her life, and she could make him no return for it. For such love as she could give was as different from that he gave and that he asked as moonlight is from sunlight—different not in degree only, but in kind. She was most miserable.

Lady Saddlethwaite put her extreme dejection down to her despair of a life which was given for her own, and was doubly rejoiced to be at least able to say, on the authority of the exasperatingly cautious doctor, that Lawley was out of danger. A great weight was lifted off Mabel's heart, but a trouble almost as deep remained. Lady Saddlethwaite was perplexed to find she had given so much less relief than she expected.

"Why, you're as miserable as ever, child!"

"It's a great debt to owe," said Mabel, thinking as much of Lawley's love as of his life.

"That's not like you, Mabel. I thought you were generous enough to forgive a debt you couldn't pay. You should think what a happiness it is to him to have done you this service. It's a debt that pays itself."

"All my debts have to pay themselves," said Mabel drearly. "You don't know what it is, Lady Saddlethwaite, to owe what you never can pay. You are always doing kindnesses that can never be repaid."

"Tut, my dear. I know there's no greater pleasure than doing *you* a kindness, and I know that Mr. Lawley thinks so too. It was you he asked after the moment he became conscious."

Lady Saddlethwaite began to suspect that Mabel had at last discerned Lawley's love, and shot this arrow at a venture. It was a palpable hit. Mabel coloured and looked distressed, and Lady Saddlethwaite, perfectly satisfied, turned the embarrassing conversation.

Meantime, the accident which revealed Lawley's love to Mabel, revealed Lord Charlecote's love to himself, not directly so much as indirectly. He got a long letter from his mother, asking for an immediate, explicit, and positive contradiction of a scandalous paragraph in the *Times*, which had been copied from *Galignani*. In this paragraph the accident was reported at some length, and with many new and interesting particulars. It seems the boat was Lord Charlecote's private yacht, Mabel was his *fiancée*, and Lawley was Mabel's guardian, and that Lord Charlecote, by the most heroic and all but impossible exertions, swam to the steamer, holding up Mabel with one hand and Lawley with the other. Upon the text of this paragraph the Dowager Lady Charlecote held forth—very furiously after her manner. Some gases liquefy under tremendous pressure, and Lord Charlecote's love, which was of a volatile and gaseous nature, needed some such opposing pressure to condense it to anything substantial. Mabel's indifference and Lawley's rivalry did something in this direction, but his mother's furious letter did much more. Like many another woman this good lady seemed to think that a match was best kept from lighting by friction. The result of her intervention was that Lord Charlecote not only did what he could to overtake and suppress this absurd newspaper report, but also did what he could to make that part of it true which connected his name with Mabel's.

The accident also affected indirectly the relation of George to Mabel. The original version of it was copied into a Melbourne paper, and there

caught George's eye more than a year after the accident it referred to occurred. He read it on a scrap of waste paper which contained specimens of wheat that had lain aside for months in a drawer.

CHAPTER XII.

THREE CONFESSIONS.

THE first meeting of Mabel and Lawley after their farewell kiss was a sad one. Lawley was miserable in the thought that his secret should have been wrung from him even in the agony of death, and in the thought that its untimely disclosure destroyed what little chance he had of her hand. He could make her but one reparation, to renounce what had become the happiness of his life—her society. If he had done her no service he might—notwithstanding his dying declaration—have allowed himself this happiness; but now he would seem to her, when they met, not only an unwelcome suitor, but a suitor who sued, not *in formâ pauperis*, but as a sordid creditor. For he knew she would take an exaggerated view of his effort to save her. Yes; he must do her now the infinitely harder service of the sacrifice of his happiness to hers.

On the other hand Mabel certainly did feel overwhelmed with her debt to Lawley, but it was the debt of his love, not of her life, which weighed most upon her. It was not, we need hardly say, that she thought little of his saving her, but that she thought so much of his loving her. She thought Lawley utterly despised her sex; and perhaps, woman fashion, she respected him the more for his contempt; the compliment of his love, therefore, was all the greater and more surprising and more distressing. For what could she do? Like Bassanio, she would give him anything in all the world but the worthless thing he asked.

"Mr. Lawley is coming down to-day, Mabel," said Lady Saddlethwaite. They had all migrated to the hotel to which Mabel and Lawley had been carried. "I've just looked in at him and said something about your anxiety to see and thank him, and all that, and he seemed quite distressed. He begged me most earnestly to ask you to think and say nothing about it, and I promised you wouldn't. I think proud people never like being thanked. They prefer to keep everyone in their debt, perhaps."

"I don't think Mr. Lawley is proud," said Mabel, thinking with a deep blush of his love for her. Lady Saddlethwaite put a most favourable interpretation upon the blush, and began to be more hopeful than ever about her matchmaking scheme. Not that she imagined for a moment that Mabel had any heart yet to give away. But she would have in time, and it was enough now for her to know, as she plainly did, that Lawley loved her. Lady Saddlethwaite was not in the least driven to speculate as to how Mabel came by her knowledge of Lawley's feelings

towards her, since the only wonder was that she hadn't divined them long since.

When, however, Lawley entered the room, Lady Saddlethwaite saw in a moment from their mutual embarrassment that something definite must have passed between them. Mabel rose and advanced to meet him with the pained and wistful expression of one who had done him some deep wrong and deeply repented of it; while Lawley also, on his side, looked more conscious of having embittered than of having preserved her life.

"You're better?" asked Mabel, as their hands met, in a voice she couldn't quite steady.

"Oh, I'm all right again, thank you," he replied, with his last words and the kiss which sealed them vividly in his thoughts and in his eyes. What a bathos was this conventional meeting as a sequel to that scene!

"You look all right!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite, who saw that she must create a diversion; "you're as white as a ghost. You must lie down on the sofa here, and submit to be nursed and made much of" Mabel stepped to the sofa and arranged the pillows with the deftness of a skilled nurse—as she was. Lawley, who was about to scorn the sofa, became suddenly glad of it.

"I've just been telling Mabel," said Lady Saddlethwaite, thinking it better to have this business of Mabel's thanks 'sided' and settled; "I've just been telling Mabel that you won't hear of being thanked for saving her life, Mr. Lawley."

"One doesn't like being thanked for what one didn't do, Lady Saddlethwaite. 'Praise undeserved,' you know. In fact, it was Lord Charlecote saved us both."

"Mabel would have been drowned many times over if she'd had the politeness to wait for Lord Charlecote to save her. But, as I was saying to her before you came in, proud people never like being thanked."

"Then I must forego my thanks to you, Lady Saddlethwaite, for all your kindness. I meant to have made you a long speech of acknowledgment before we parted to-morrow."

"To-morrow?"

"Yes; I find I must get home sooner than I expected."

"But we, too, must get back before the twelfth. We may as well keep together. It will make only two days' difference. Besides, you are certainly not strong enough to undertake such a journey at once and alone."

"But I wasn't thinking of returning by rail. Dr. Pardoe says a sea voyage would set me up."

"By sea; ugh! I didn't know Dr. Pardoe was a homœopathist. I should have thought you'd had enough of the sea."

"I hope to have only a homœopathic dose of it this time. I should not have taken the prescription, Lady Saddlethwaite, if you'd not had Lord Charlecote to take care of you."

"To take care of us! Who's to take care of *you*?"

"Why, I shall have nothing to do but lie on deck all day and smoke."

"Well, it's a very ungracious way of thanking you for your escort, Mr. Lawley, to get into a pet about your leaving us, but we couldn't pay you a higher compliment, you know. We may as well leave to-morrow, too, Mabel, if it suits Lord Charlecote. What do you say, dear?"

Mabel assented absently. She knew perfectly well that Lawley was leaving them for another reason than that of health, as, indeed, did Lady Saddlethwaite. That kindly old lady was distressed by their estrangement, and began to think they would come to a better understanding if left to themselves. Accordingly she rose in the most natural way in the world and left the room to see Parker about packing. Then there was silence that might be felt for half a minute, broken at last and desperately by Mabel.

"I haven't thanked you because I couldn't thank you, Mr. Lawley," speaking hurriedly and tremulously.

"I ask you only to forgive me," Lawley answered in a low voice.

"Forgive you! It was not of my life only I was thinking when I said I couldn't thank you." Here she paused for a moment, and then went on as if with a brave effort, "I was thinking of another and dearer debt which is worth more than my life, and which I value more, but which I cannot pay—I've nothing to pay with," with a kind of piteous appeal in her voice.

"I never thought I was anything to you. I never hoped it. How could I hope it?" exclaimed Lawley, rising impetuously, standing before her and looking down upon her. "But it sweetened death to me to speak."

"You are more to me than anyone left to me, than anyone ever can be to me again; but no one can ever be to me again what—what you wish. And now I've lost you, too!" she added, following her thoughts more closely than her words, and looking up at Lawley with the deepest, sweetest distress in her face. It was impossible for any man, even for Lawley, not to gather some hope from these hopeless words and joy from this set sad face. Mabel was as certain of her constancy as of her life, and expected others to be as convinced of it; but even Lawley was little likely to think it absolutely proof against time, or to despair upon being told with the simplest and sweetest sincerity, "You are more to me than anyone left to me—than anyone ever can be to me again." At the same time this ingenuous assurance, of course, only confirmed his resolve to spare her the embarrassment of his presence in these first months of her bereavement. Lover-like, he was more depressed by the imminent separation than cheered by the hope her words conveyed. For love is well painted a boy and blind, that is, impatient and improvident. He was still standing before her as she looked up at him with such sweet and simple sadness in her face. As he looked down upon it he would have—

Given all earthly bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in a kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

The yearning so expressed itself through his dark eyes that Mabel blushed under their gaze, and thereby brought him back to himself. He took her hand in his. "Mabel, I loved you so that I should never have told my love if death had not wrung the secret from me. Now I can only help you to forget it and me."

"But you will forget it, and we shall be again as we were."

"As we were? I have always loved you, I think, from the first day I saw you, and I always shall, always—always." He repeated the word with ineffable tenderness, and its plaintive echo lingered in Mabel's memory, and long afterwards recalled the whole scene daily, and often many times a day, and pleaded for him piteously and powerfully. There was a moment's silence, during which he still held her hand, while she looked up helplessly at him with eyes now larger and brighter through tears. This was an effective way to make her forget him and his love!

"I thought our last good-bye was the very last," he said, "but there is this one more." Mabel could not speak just then, but the trembling tears welled over and spoke for her.

"Good-bye!" he said. Did he expect her once again to bid him a lover's good-bye with speechless lips? He did not know what he expected. He was delirious with love. Mabel still could answer only with her now fast-falling tears. He stooped and pressed a passionate kiss on her quivering lips and was gone.

He was wise enough and strong enough to keep to his resolve that this should be their good-bye. He kept his room till the hour came next day for him to embark, having in the meantime made a clean breast of the whole business to Lady Saddlethwaite. It was as well he did so, for otherwise the kind old lady might have taken ill Mabel's persistent keeping of a secret which was not her own, while Mabel would not have had the inexpressible relief of her sympathy. Lawley himself, however, was the chief gainer by his confession.

"While you were drowning!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite in answer to Lawley's rather bald account of the business. He had said nothing, and could not bring himself to say anything, of the clinging kiss which was their last farewell, but of this, too, Lady Saddlethwaite heard later from the lips that suffered it.

"While you were drowning! I never heard anything so romantic. What did she say?"

"We weren't sitting together in a drawing-room, you know, Lady Saddlethwaite," answered Lawley with a short laugh. "It was hardly to be expected that she should blush and hesitate and hang down her head, or that she should draw herself up to her full height and cry 'Unhand

me, sirrah.' She said nothing. It's not easy to say anything when you're drowning,"

"Yet you managed to do it to some purpose," said Lady Saddlethwaite, laughing also. "But you've been sitting together in a drawing-room since. Was it 'Unhand me, sirrah,' this morning?"

"In a mild form: She said 'I was more to her than anyone could ever be to her again, but no one could be to her again what I asked to be.'"

"A very mild form! With any other girl in the world but Mabel that would be an acceptance: but she meant it."

"Yes, she meant it," dependently.

"She meant it, but how long will she mean it? My dear Mr. Lawley, you don't suppose a young girl barely out of her teens can be crushed for life under any blow? In spring a rose can stand any storm and raise its head after it and smell all the sweeter for it; it's only in autumn there's no recovery," said Lady Saddlethwaite sadly, thinking, as she thought daily, of her dead daughter.

"Recovery will be very slow with her."

"Of course it will be slow with her. Would you have it quick? What would you think of a girl who could listen to the suit of a second lover three months after she had heard of the murder of the first? And Mabel of all girls!"

"I didn't think we had a minute to live," he said apologetically, thinking Lady Saddlethwaite was echoing his own self-reproach for the avowal of love which death had surprised him out of.

"Why, you don't think I blame you, or she blames you?" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite, expressing her surprise by articulating each word with staccato distinctness. "To think of her in death, to forget death in the thought of her! It was magnificent!"

"But not war?" added Lawley smiling, highly gratified at his honourable acquittal by so competent a judge as Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Yes, and war too. You've won her heart by it—at least the reversion of her heart. But you must wait. Such a girl is worth ten years' siege."

"She's worth a life's siege!" he cried enthusiastically; "but a month without her is ten years," he added with a sigh.

"You must make your mind up to be many months without her. Your absence and its cause will plead for you better than anything else in the world. You are quite right to leave us at once. She will think of you more, and think more of you, than if she saw you every day. You must make the most of your last interview with her."

"It's over," he said with something like a groan.

"Over! Was it? No; it's too sacred to talk about," with a kind and approving smile. She understood and honoured Lawley's reticence on a subject that really was sacred to him, and she knew besides that she would now hear from Mabel—as of her own sex—what Lawley could not have brought himself to confide to her. She rose and left him

with the promise that she would do all she could for him, and would write from time to time to him letters of which Mabel would be the burden.

Notwithstanding the comfort and encouragement Lady Saddlethwaite gave him, Lawley relapsed into depression—due in part to his weakness—and after a sleepless night was in such a state that his cautious Scotch doctor declined to answer for his life if he embarked—which gave him, of course, a gloomy satisfaction in embarking. Dr. Pardoe was very much annoyed. He would have regarded Lawley's death as vexatious. It would have been to him as the loss of a forty-pound salmon to an angler who had played him for hours with consummate skill and patience, and saw him break away on the brink of being landed. Lawley, however, did not "go off the hooks," and the doctor was appeased.

Meantime he had Mabel again on hands. The girl was completely prostrated after the distressing scene with Lawley. Her worst fears as to his love were realised. It was the love of a strong man, which is as his strength, and would last and mar his life. That he would ever cease to love her was unlikely, that she should ever come to love him was impossible. She had no heart to give him or anyone, and never would have if she lived to old age. Of this Mabel was as certain as any girl of her age in her circumstances would be, and with much more reason than most. She was hardly less certain of Lawley's constancy. He would not forget her. Would she have had him forget her? Well, not forget her, but—but—No; she could not sincerely wish that he should cease to love her! She could not love him, yet she could not resign his love. It was as a caged bird which she prized so dearly that she could not bear to free it from the restless misery of its imprisonment. The most she could sincerely wish was expressed in an exquisite poem she knew by heart before she had reason to take to heart its last sigh, or sob rather, of farewell:

Should my shadow cross thy thoughts
Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
For calmer hours to memory's darkest hold,
If not to be forgotten—not at once—
Not all forgotten.

But if Mabel could not bring herself to wish that Lawley should forget her, or even that he should altogether cease to love her, she took herself cruelly to task for her selfishness; and was, perhaps, the more wretched of the two. For while Lawley had some hope, and at times good hope, inspired by Lady Saddlethwaite, of Mabel's coming at last to love him, Mabel, of course, believed her love could no more be brought back to life than her murdered lover. She was, then, intensely wretched, and her wretchedness told on her strength, not yet re-established, and returned her, as we have said, upon the doctor's hands.

The doctor did and could do little for her, but Lady Saddlethwaite did much. She told Mabel of Mr. Lawley's parting confidence, and so set free the floodgates of her heart. It was a profound relief to Mabel to

pour out self-reproaches and praises of Lawley mingled rather incoherently.

"He'll get over it, my dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite cheerily. She was using, so to speak, a stethoscope, to hear how Mabel's heart beat.

"Do you think he will?" asked Mabel, not as happily as might be expected.

"Of course he will. Men always do."

"But I think Mr. Lawley is different."

"He's a man like the rest. Men don't hold by one anchor, my dear, as we do. They've so many more things to think of."

"If I was sure he would forget me," said Mabel, speaking very slowly, "I should——"

"Be very much disappointed? Of course you would."

"Yes, I should. I couldn't bear that he should forget me altogether," she confessed honestly with a wan smile. "He has been so much to me, Lady Saddlethwaite. But if he would only come to like me as I like him!"

"I've no doubt, dear, in time you will come to have the same kind of feeling for each other."

"Do you think so?" cried Mabel eagerly, not for a moment suspecting Lady Saddlethwaite's *double-entente*. Indeed, Lady Saddlethwaite would not have risked it if she had not been perfectly certain of Mabel's being above such a suspicion.

"I've no doubt at all about it," replied her ladyship decidedly. And she hadn't. She felt as certain that Mabel would come in time to return Lawley's love as that she didn't and couldn't return it now. Well; time will tell if she was right, and we shall leave our heroine to its influence for a year before we return to her. Meantime by a change of scene we hope to help our readers' imagination over the interval. It may, perhaps, have occurred to some of them to wonder where all this time was Mabel's faithful factotum, Mr. Robert Sagar. Mabel didn't know. No one knew. It was a great mystery. We shall proceed now to unravel it. Mr. Sagar had fled a second time in a panic from Wefton, not now, like St. Kevin, shunning the shafts of "eyes of most unholy blue," but a more insidious and pertinacious foe even than Miss Masters or any of her sex.

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